

bus **AND** *coach*

PROFESSIONAL

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Community dividend

Profile: Cardiff Bus' David Brown

**FEATURED IN
THIS ISSUE...**



MBO winners

Coombes leads Optare
buyout from NABI.



O-licence cut

Traffic commissioner takes
action against First Bristol.



Arriva buys

Expansion in Manchester
and Italy for Arriva.



Common rail

Neoman reveals D20 six-
cylinder engine for Lion's City.

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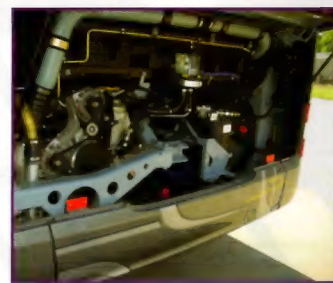
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News - page 4.



Analysis - page 8.



A cleaner solution - page 16.

Contents

4 NEWS

Optare team in £11.8million buyout.
Accessible Profiles for Stagecoach.
Bustitution plan in the midlands.

8 ANALYSIS

Optare's management buyout ensures the future of a British business with long roots that has built its reputation on design flair. *Bus and Coach Professional* sees a positive future for the Yorkshire-based manufacturer.

10 INTERNATIONAL

The best bus and coach news from around the globe.

12 RAPID TRANSIT

Bus and Coach Professional's regular feature covering developments in bus rapid transit and light rail. *Peter Plisner* reports.

14 DIARY

Alexander Pemberton reviews industry news and events.

15 PRODUCT

Rav Jagdev updates on industry products and services.

16 A CLEANER SOLUTION

Steve Banner reports exclusively for *Bus and Coach Professional* on emissions technology and other developments at Neoman.



19 PROFILE - DELIVERING A COMMUNITY DIVIDEND

With a successful route network and a relatively new low floor fleet, Cardiff Bus' MD still believes there is room for improvement. *Gavin Booth* hitches a ride with David Brown.

22 INSTRUMENT CONTROL

Vehicles are now being equipped with multiple electronic units for new technologies to retrieve and transmit data across wireless networks. *Steve Banner* reports.

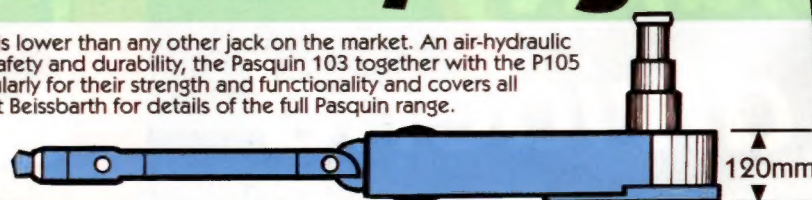
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Profile - page 19.



Quick shifting - page 28.

28 QUICK SHIFTING

Automated manual transmissions for smaller vehicles and new units for Euro 4 and hybrid applications are amongst the developments in the transmissions market. **Steve Banner** reports.



32 WHO BUYS WHAT

The latest bus and coach deliveries.

34 WHO MAKES WHAT

Bus and Coach Professional's unique guide to chassis and bodies for the UK operator.

55 PEOPLE

The movers and shakers in the bus and coach industry.

Comment



Wheelchair-accessible express coaches are in the news again, with Stagecoach having placed an order for 25 accessible Plaxton Profiles. This follows an earlier order for 24 from First, showing that Plaxton's innovative approach is paying off, with a vehicle which allows wheelchair access through the main entrance, and which can therefore use existing bus stations with relative ease.

And National Express, working with Caetano, is about to unveil its solution to providing wheelchair access through the main passenger door.

Whatever the arguments against wheelchair access – and they are many – manufacturers and operators have between them, in a fairly short time span, developed a range of vehicles offering either roll-on or lift access from minibuses to double-deck buses, and now express coaches.

But, of course, there is still the very big question of the infrastructure. Operators are still waiting for the changes to kerbs and bus stops that are needed to make the most of low-floor buses. Let's hope we are not still waiting a decade from now for the changes required to ensure accessible coaches work as they are designed to.

School transport in Ireland has long been handled differently from the methods used in Britain. Perhaps as befits an island lying between Britain and America it could be seen as an amalgam of both systems, with a dedicated fleet, US style, but often using older vehicles cascaded from other duties, British style, as well as purpose-built buses.

Like Britain, Ireland has a "three-for-two" rule and, sadly, like Britain, Ireland has had the occasional fatal accident involving school buses.

The accident last term which resulted in the deaths of five children may not have motivated the Irish government, but it surely gave impetus to any plans which it might have been developing and it has announced that by the end of 2006 all school children will have a seat – no more "three-for-two" – and a seat belt.

This comes at a cost, and with centralised control of school services in Ireland it's relatively easy to make new rules.

It will probably never happen here, but it might just give our politicians food for thought.

Steve Rooney

steve.rooney@busandcoach.com



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BNEWS BRIEFS

New bus stations, improvements to existing bus stations and the introduction of 33 new AccessBus vehicles, are among the measures contained in the **West Yorkshire's** £34million Local Transport Plan, which has been submitted in provisional form to the DfT. Drawn up by Metro, the West Yorkshire PTE and the five West Yorkshire district councils, the plan covers the five-year period from 2006 to 2011. A final plan will be submitted in March 2006 in the light of feedback from the DfT.

A taxi-bus service is to start in **Redditch** next month, with three seven-seat vehicles operating each evening between 20:00 and 23:00. Services will operate to three areas of the town, with passengers being charged £1 per journey.

Stagecoach and careers organisation Connexions are joining forces to educate children in **Corby** about the dangers of damaging buses. The programme will include bus naming, to encourage children to see buses as a community asset.

Lothian Buses drivers staged a two-day strike last weekend in an ongoing dispute about pay. An overtime ban is in place, meaning that the company is currently operating Saturday schedules on weekdays.

Market Prices

	Price	High	Low
Arriva	568	570	417
Dunn-Line	3	5	2
FirstGroup	318	379	280
Go-Ahead	1294	1608	1075
National Exp.	870	937	644
Stagecoach	113	123	83
Tellings	101	150	86

Closing prices on 1/8/05 plus 12 months high and low.

Stagecoach to take 25 wheelchair-accessible Profiles

STAGECOACH is to introduce wheelchair-accessible coaches to some of its interurban express services. The company has placed an order with Plaxton for 25 Profiles which provide easy access for wheelchair passengers through the main passenger entrance.

Stagecoach follows First in specifying Plaxton's new generation of accessible coaches, with First about to start taking delivery of 24 for operation in south Wales and south-west England.

"It is the best solution

around to providing wheelchair access on coaches," says Les Warneford, managing director Stagecoach UK Bus. "That's why we have ordered them."

The Profiles, based on Volvo B7R chassis, incorporate a wheelchair lift in the entrance which folds out of the way when not in use. The lift gives access to a space alongside the entrance where there are secure fixings to hold the wheelchair and its user safely in position.

"In developing this innovative solution to carrying wheelchair passengers we were mindful of

the need to make boarding and alighting as easy as possible, and to provide a vehicle which could be used with existing roadside and bus station infrastructure," explains Plaxton sales director Kevin Wood.

Stagecoach's accessible Profiles, due to be delivered later this year, follow a batch of conventional B7R Profiles which joined the Scottish-based group's fleet at the start of the year and were used to upgrade services in north-east Scotland.

www.stagecoachgroup.com

Fastway Scheme costs are totally unacceptable, says council leader

A RISE in the cost of the Crawley Fastway scheme has been described as "totally unacceptable" by the leader of West Sussex county council, Henry Smith. The latest estimated cost of the project is £6.2million more than the previous estimate which was £23million.

Smith has called for an independent investigation into the cost increases using auditors from another local authority in the south-east.

In addition to the independent audit, the county council is considering whether delay by third parties could have contributed to the cost overrun, and whether there is any contractual redress to recover some of the money.

Tex Pemberton, cabinet member for highways and transport says: "The scale of these cost increases and the fact they are only now coming to light is a source of major concern for myself and my cabinet colleagues. We will await the

results of the inquiry but already strong action has been taken to ensure proper controls are in place to complete the project."

However Pemberton acknowledges that Fastway is proving successful in generating bus passengers. Latest figures suggest that the existing routes are nearly at capacity with more than 6,000 passengers a day using Fastway buses. This exceeds by 40 per cent the expected passenger numbers.

He notes: "Fastway has been recognised both nationally and internationally as a model for delivering innovative and successful public transport schemes. These cost increases will dent that success story. However, the achievement in terms of improvements to public transport in Crawley remains a significant one."

Fastway services started in 2003 and the network is scheduled to be completed early next year.

www.westsussex.gov.uk

Ireland to belt up school kids and end 3-for-2 rule

THE IRISH government is to end the "three for two rule" on school buses and says that all buses used on school contracts will be fitted with seat belts by the end of next year. The move will see an additional 380 vehicles being employed on school contracts, with 250 minibuses and 50 large buses being added for the new school term next month, and a further 80 large buses being introduced in 2006.

This will cost an additional Euro35million in capital expenditure, and an ongoing Euro11million a year.

The extra minibuses which start in September will be sourced from private operators; the big buses from Bus Éireann.

The "three for two rule" ends now for older pupils, and will be phased out completely by December 2006.

Education minister Mary Hanafin says: "This comprehensive package will see each child with a seat of their own and the use of a seat belt for their journey to and from school. This additional investment in the school transport system will see more buses from Bus Éireann and the private sector added to the school bus fleet. Our school transport system will continue to maintain the highest standards."

The extra funding will also see the trial of 20 purpose-built school buses of different types for operational trials. A number of options are being considered, including BMC.

www.education.ie

Belt plus for CPT

CPT is claiming a major success in persuading the Department for Transport to adopt the seat belt wearing directive 2003/20/EC in the most flexible way possible. The original proposals would have cost the industry up to £7.6million.

Regulations now being drafted by the DfT and to come into force on 1 February 2006 will require operators to advise passengers

of the legal requirement to wear an available seat belt, but may use any of the options permitted by the directive.

This means that the driver, conductor, courier or group leader could make an announcement, or that an audio or video tape could be used, or a sign or the DfT's original proposal of a specified pictogram at every seat could be used to fulfil the legal obligation.

www.cpt-uk.org

Optare team in £11.8million buyout

OPTARE's management has completed an £11.8million buyout of the group from North American Bus Industries (NABI). The management team, led by managing director Bob Coombes, says that it will be "business as usual" for customers, suppliers and employees.

The management buyout of Optare comes as part of NABI's restructuring programme which has been forced upon the parent group by continuing poor performance and debt issues. Meanwhile Optare has seen strong growth in 2005 in the UK with registrations up 41 per cent in the first six months of the year and an 11 per cent overall market share.

Bob Coombes says that he is elated and relieved at the conclusion of the deal. "There were a number of other interested parties. It was not a given, but at the end our bid proved the most attractive to the NABI board."

Coombes confirms that the company will continue to provide full warranty support for all its products.

The company currently employs 520 people with manufacturing at Leeds and Rotherham. There are no immediate plans to make any changes, according to Coombes, and the company is continuing to advertise vacancies for further production staff.

"We have a very strong order book and the prospects for 2006 are very bright," says Coombes. "We would like to see further growth in Tempo sales and we are very encouraged by the good reports it is getting from existing

customers including Trent Barton."

Optare has achieved strong growth in recent years for its leading product, the Solo, with both longer and narrower versions. The Slimline Solo has won more than 250 sales since its launch in April last year, many of which are incremental sales as shown in the increased registrations.

Optare's relationship with Spanish coachbuilder Ferqui will continue and a further product in its coach range will be launched at the NEC show in October. The long-planned new double-deck is still being worked on, according to Coombes, although he believes that the earlier decision to prioritise development of the full size single deck with the Tempo has been vindicated in the light of stronger demand in that sector than double-deck.

"Optare got where it did by innovation," adds Coombes, "and I don't see that changing now. The thing that really excites me about the MBO is that there is a lot of latent potential in the company that has not been fully exploited commercially."

Optare is on target for a turnover of £65million in the current financial year, compared to £49million in the previous year.

In addition to Coombes and finance director Roger Fossey, the MBO includes technical director Glenn Saint, aftersales director Paul Shepherd, materials director Brian Wiggins and plant director Colin Childs – see People, page 55.

i Analysis - *Optimising flair and reliability*, page 8.



■ Optare managing director Bob Coombes (left) and Roger Fossey, finance director.

Accessible coaches and US cutbacks for NatEx

NATIONAL EXPRESS is cutting back its operations in the USA, and is about to unveil a new wheelchair-accessible coach, which it has developed with Caetano and PLS.

The news comes as the company reveals a drop in revenue and a rise in profits for the first six months of 2005. Revenue for the period was £1,077.7million, down slightly from £1,157.9million in the same period last year, while operating profit was £67.3million, up from £53.2million.

Coach ridership is up five per cent, while operating profit for the six months almost doubled from £2.1million to £4.1million on a turnover of £91.7million (up from £87.8million in the first six months of 2004). The company says that 25 per cent of its coach tickets are now sold on the internet.

It is to unveil next month a new DDA-compliant coach with front entrance wheelchair accessibility, which it claims as a European first – a statement First may want to challenge as it is about to put its first accessible Plaxton Profiles in to operation. However NatEx claims that its approach will be unique, and will be revealing fuller details this month ahead of September's launch.

The bus division also saw revenue rise, from £115.5million to £127.0million, but profits fell because of a one-off charge of £2.1million because of the introduction of international financial reporting standards. Operating profit was £18.2million, down from £19.6million. The high-quality limited-stop Premier Bus service introduced in the West Midlands has recorded double-digit growth in six months.

The company is in the process of selling its American transit business, ATC, to Connex for \$93million – meaning that the deal will see NatEx incurring an "impairment charge" of £60million. ATC operates in 50 cities. The money realised from the sale of ATC will be invested in the group's North American school bus business.

i www.nationalexpressgroup.com

NEWS BRIEFS

Bus workers in London have been praised by the **TGWU** for their work during last month's terrorist attacks on the capital's transport system. Speaking after an emergency meeting of TGWU officials, regional secretary Eddie McDermott said he was proud of their response and humbled by their devotion to getting London moving again by putting their own safety second.

Bus Éireann has launched a direct daily coach service linking Ireland and Poland, as part of the Eurolines network. The single fare from Dublin to Warsaw is €139 (£96). A return costs €199 (£137).

First is revising services in Bristol this month, with some having frequencies increased while others are seeing timetables cut. Area operations director Jenny MacLeod says: "We continually review all our services and routes and try to respond to customer demand and usage wherever possible. These changes are not related to the findings of the recent public inquiry, but represent a movement of resources around the network."

UK diesel price update

	pence per litre
Northern Ireland	91.1
Scotland	90.1
Wales	90.2
North	90.2
North West	89.2
Yorkshire & Humberside	89.1
West Midlands	89.5
East Midlands	89.6
East Anglia	90.2
South East	89.7
South West	89.8
London	89.0
UK garage average	89.7
Supermarket average	87.9

Retail price sample from garages in main population centres.

Source: AA

BNEWS BRIEFS

A maximum £1 local fare on bus services in **Kendal** has been introduced in a joint initiative between Cumbria county council and Stagecoach. The price of a weekly mega-rider ticket has been cut from £8 to £5. The experimental scheme is designed to encourage more people to use the town's bus services.

Peterborough city council has joined the growing number of local authorities and bus operators offering a text messaging service for bus times. At present the service gives scheduled times but the plan is to link it to satellite positioning systems to provide real-time information on selected routes.

The High Court in Dublin has awarded €750,000 (£520,000) to the family of a woman killed when a bus mounted the kerb at the city's Wellington Quay last year. The action was taken against **Dublin Bus** by a man whose 69 year-old mother was one of five people who died in the accident in February 2004.

A new minibus service from Windermere to Whitehaven has started, linking the two towns via the Wrynose and Hard Knott passes. The service, operated by **Mountain Goat**, is running five days a week during the summer holidays and then at weekends until the end of the season.

A solar-powered bus stop has been installed in **Brighton** after passengers complained the timetables were difficult to read after dark. Photovoltaic cells store energy in a battery during the day - when a button is pressed the timetable is illuminated. Brighton & Hove council hopes to install ten similar bus stops each year until 2011. The council is also considering the use of solar power to illuminate bus shelters.

Arson is suspected in a fire last week which damaged three buses at the **First Eastern Counties** depot in Ipswich.

First to have Bristol fleet reduced by commissioner

FIRST BRISTOL is to have the number of vehicles on its O-licence reduced following a public inquiry held by Western traffic commissioner Philip Brown. The size of the reduction - either 25 or 50 vehicles - will depend on the findings of VOSA inspectors when they examine the company's maintenance standards in November.

The public inquiry was triggered by VOSA spot checks conducted between November 2004 and February 2005, and First says that the problems were concentrated at one depot.

Managing director Alex Perry notes: "We are confident that the robust action we have taken immediately following these spot checks has improved our maintenance and engineering standards across the company. We have a completely new

management team at Muller Road Depot.

"I am confident that the investigation will find improvements in our maintenance standards and that we will receive a satisfactory

report."

Perry adds that a reduction of 25 vehicles - to 325 - would not affect the operational fleet but would stop service expansion.

www.firstgroup.com



First Bristol faces O-licence reduction following public inquiry.

Shortfall in pensioner travel funding predicted

NEXUS, the Tyne & Wear PTE, is forecasting a £7million shortfall in government funding for free travel for pensioners when the scheme starts in April. It is pressing for a change in the formula for allocating central government funding for the scheme.

Nexus director general Mike Parker says: "Although the work that has been done has resulted in the vast majority of local authorities now being properly funded, it is still apparent that

Nexus is the worst affected body in the country and we are still looking at a funding shortfall of some £7million. However, the government are just about to embark on a new period of consultation about the issue and we will have the chance to put our case forcibly."

Parker is supported by David Clelland, MP for Tyne Bridge and chairman of the Northern Group of MPs, who warns that inadequate funding could threaten support for local

bus services: "We welcome the significant improvement in the amount of grant that Tyne and Wear is to receive under the new formula - an increase of £5million - but it is still not enough to ensure that this very welcome measure for our passengers will not have any unintended consequences on either council tax or local bus services."

www.nexus.org.uk

Electric for Tyneside

TYNESIDE's Quaylink service, operated by Stagecoach using battery-electric buses supplied by Designline of New Zealand, started last weekend. Two routes serve Newcastle's Quayside area, one from Gateshead Interchange, the other from Haymarket bus station.

The £7.7million service has been funded by the DfT, Nexus, the Tyne & Wear PTE, and Newcastle and Gateshead councils. It is the biggest use so far of battery-electric buses in Britain, using 10 vehicles operating from 07.00 to 24.00 seven days a week.

A flat fare of 70p is charged and also available is a £1 Hour Rider ticket.

www.stagecoachgroup.com

Contract powers

GREATER MANCHESTER PTA has confirmed that it is to seek government powers to introduce statutory quality partnerships or quality contracts.

Says PTA chairman Roger Jones: "It's becoming increasingly clear that the current system is not delivering the improvements to bus services passengers want."

"In particular, poor punctuality and reliability is still proving a major barrier in attracting people onto buses. Where all else fails and the only practical way to improve bus services is through statutory quality partnerships or quality contracts, we will seek government powers to introduce these."

www.gmpte.com

Artics for Cardiff

WITH CONTINUING growth in passenger numbers Cardiff Bus is considering introducing articulated buses on services to Ely in what could be the city's first quality bus partnership. The company is in discussion with Scania about its articulated OmniCity, and will develop a new image for the vehicles.

"They will be very different from the rest of the fleet as we want to attract car users on to public transport," says Cardiff Bus managing director David Brown.

With new vehicles and a QBP, Brown sees significant benefits for his customers. If the plan goes ahead these would be the first articulated buses in Wales.

(Profile - page 19).

Blue Bus name to be replaced by end of 2005

ARRIVA has strengthened its presence in Manchester with the acquisition of the assets of Blue Bus of Bolton for £2.9million. It took over the 86-vehicle operation last Sunday, with Arriva branding being applied to the fleet in advance of an accelerated repainting programme which will see the Blue Bus name vanish by the end of the year.

Blue Bus started up 14 years ago and operated from depots in Bolton and Eccles. The Eccles depot is to close, with its operations being transferred to Arriva's existing Manchester base.

Arriva is taking on all 218 Blue Bus employees.

Arriva North West and Wales



■ Blue Bus' 86-vehicle fleet taken over by Arriva.

managing director Bob Hind says: "This is an excellent acquisition for Arriva. It gives us a strong foothold in an area which is new to the group. We're looking

forward to delivering the high level of service in Bolton that customers have come to expect of Arriva."

www.arriva.co.uk

'Bustitution' plans for Wolverhampton-Walsall route

THE WOLVERHAMPTON to Walsall rail service is to be replaced by what is described as "a fast coach link" from next April, as part of the Strategic Rail Authority's West Midlands Rail plan. However the move has drawn strong criticism from the West Midlands PTA.

PTA chairman Gary Clarke is hopeful that the rail service can be saved. "Our officers in Centro [the West Midlands PTE]

have already had a meeting with the Department for Transport to hammer out the details of funding and there are good signs that we can find a solution to maintain a passenger service," he says.

"We stood up for passengers and local interests throughout the consultation on this plan. Our opposition to cutting passenger services was made quite clear - and that opposition will continue even though the government was

now approved the plan."

Local councillors say the replacement bus service now being proposed by the SRA is not an acceptable alternative. The current rail service runs hourly, with a 13-minute journey time. The existing Travel West Midlands bus service linking the two towns runs every 7 minutes, but takes 40 minutes to make the trip.

www.sra.gov.uk

Arriva extend its Italian presence

ARRIVA is taking an 80 per cent stake in part of the operations of Italian bus operator SAVDA Group in a deal worth €13.6million (£9.4million) and has an option to acquire the remaining 20 per cent in 2008 for a maximum of €4.6million (£3.2million). Completion of the purchase of the initial stakeholding should take place in the fourth quarter of 2005, when the present shareholders of the SAVDA Group complete the formal legal process to demerge these operations.

The bus businesses being acquired operate in the Piemonte and Valle d'Aosta regions of northern Italy, to the west of Arriva's current operations. They include regular bus services as well as commercial, contract and private hire services. The operations include a 50 per cent holding in Autostradale, which operates scheduled services in Lombardy and Piemonte as well as operating airport shuttle

services.

Consolidated turnover for the acquired businesses for the year to 31 December 2004 was €31.7million (£22.0million) and earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation was €3.6million (£2.5million). The businesses employ around 450 people and operate some 330 vehicles.

Arriva first entered the Italian bus market in July 2002 when it acquired the SAB Group in Northern Italy. In May 2004, Arriva further expanded its operations in Italy when it acquired a 49 per cent stake in SAF, based in Udine.

Bob Davies, Arriva's chief executive, says: "This acquisition allows us to expand in an area of Italy which is strategically significant for Arriva and we look forward to working with the management and employees of this successful business."

www.arriva.co.uk

Oyster partners shortlisted

THE ABILITY to use Transport for London's Oyster smart card for other types of payment has taken a step forward with TfL shortlisting seven potential partners for the scheme.

The project would allow Oyster holders to use the card to make low-value payments for a range of goods and services at newsagents, fast-food outlets, supermarkets and car parking machines - all areas where cash handling can be slow or inconvenient.

Jay Walder, managing director of finance and planning at TfL, says: "The use of contactless smart cards for low-value payments is growing in popularity around the globe. Such schemes are now well established in Hong Kong and Japan and significant trials are taking place in the United States."

www.tfl.gov.uk

NEWS BRIEFS

Gloucestershire county council is to fund the installation of CCTV cameras on 10 buses used on school services in an effort to curb unruly behaviour. The 12-month trial will be on routes with the most serious problems and if it is deemed successful could be extended to other services.

An Urban Bus Challenge service in Skelmersdale was withdrawn last month following the end of funding. The Skelmersdale Roundabout was operated by West Lancs Dial-a-Ride and carried over 36,000 people in the last year.

A summer circular service has been launched to improve public transport around the Chatsworth Estate in Derbyshire. The Chatsworth Shuttle is jointly funded by Chatsworth, Derwent Valley Rural Transport Partnership, Peak Connections and the Peak District National Park Authority. The service is run by Hulleys of Baslow, and an all-day ticket costs £1.50.

Faced with an eight per cent rise in costs on recent rounds of tenders, Hampshire county council is reviewing its spending on public transport. Its cut-off point for most services will be a subsidy of £2.50 per passenger journey. Some lightly-used routes are costing as much as £10 per journey in subsidy.

European diesel price update

pence per litre equivalent

Austria	63.28
Belgium	73.89
Czech Rep	63.68
Denmark	77.45
Estonia	54.76
Finland	63.76
France	70.13
Germany	75.26
Greece	60.47
Netherlands	71.57
Hungary	79.40
Ireland	69.65
Italy	75.13
Luxembourg	59.24
Norway	77.32
Poland	65.65
Portugal	61.98
Spain	61.50
Sweden	77.96
Switzerland	72.59

Source: AA

Optimising flair and reliability

Optare's management buyout ensures the future of a British business with long roots that has built its reputation on design flair. *Bus and Coach Professional* sees a positive future for the Yorkshire-based manufacturer.

Months of speculation about the future of Optare ended this week with the announcement that the business has been bought by its management, headed by managing director Bob Coombes, for the sum of £11.8million. Thus ends a five-year period of ownership by Hungarian-based North American Bus Industries, a company with troubles of its own.

NABI paid £21.5million for Optare in 2000.

As part of NABI, Optare had access to new markets and had developed a US version of its Solo midibus, which had secured some success in specialist shuttle bus markets.

But in a world dominated by big multinational players – Volvo, Scania, EvoBus, Irisbus and Neoman – can a small British business possibly survive on its own?

One of its strengths is a broad customer base. Optare products are bought by more British operators than those of any other manufacturer. Take the Solo alone, which has become the market leader in low-floor small buses helped, no doubt, by the troubles at TransBus in 2004, which cast a shadow over the rival Mini Pointer Dart.

Solos can be found in fleets large and small along the length of Britain – admittedly often only in ones and twos – but it has secured volume business from big names such as First and Stagecoach,

and recent additions to the range have further broadened its appeal. The smallest Solo SlimLine is a 25-seater; the biggest Solo seats 37, which is only five or six seats fewer than some heavy-duty 12m models.

The Alero – after a troubled start – is establishing itself as a force to be reckoned with in the welfare market, where it offers roll-on access for wheelchairs. Other manufacturers have been slow to exploit this market sector, which is notorious for being price-driven when it comes to buying decisions, a reflection of the sometimes precarious funding available for such operations.

Optare says that it's getting strong positive feedback on its new Tempo, a full-size 17-tonne model which replaced the unhappy 15-tonne Excel, a vehicle which never quite shook off its early reputation for being troublesome. Coombes cites the Tempo's first customer, Trent Barton, as being particularly impressed by the Tempo's performance.

With growing interest in big single-deckers Coombes is also in no doubt that the company was right to sideline its slowly-evolving double-deck project in favour of the Tempo, but adds that the double-decker is still part of the Optare plan. Indeed it's been part of the plan since NABI took over in 2000, so no fears of rushed product development here.

It has missed out on the large London orders and will now be



■ Bob Coombes, Optare managing director.

developed as a Euro 4 rather than a Euro 3 model. But with London winning the bid to host the 2012 Olympics the new Optare 'decker' will be available for any upsurge in demand which the world's biggest sporting event brings.

The company remains committed to coaches, and these are built at its Rotherham factory, or sourced from Spanish builder Ferqui, depending on the size of vehicle you want. A new coach will be unveiled at Coach & Bus Live in October.

With a broad product range and an unrivalled customer base, Optare clearly has significant strengths.

What about its weaknesses?

Historically the company has developed stylish new models, launched them with some panache, and then ... ran into

difficulties. Sometimes it has read the market wrongly and come up with a product not many operators have wanted. Anyone remember the Sigma? Sometimes the product has suffered from insufficient development, as was the case with the Alero.

Being able to source the best-available components for your vehicles is one of the benefits available to any specialist builder, allowing them to take advantage of the massive (and expensive) research and development work carried out by engine suppliers such as Mercedes and Cummins, and gearbox specialists like ZF, Voith and Allison. The trick then is to engineer them in a combination which works.

Optare is not a one-product company, even if much of its current success is based on the

Solo. It has breathed remarkable extra life into the product – launched in 1997 – with its longer and narrower versions introduced last year, but it does need to demonstrate that it can succeed in other market segments.

Small may be beautiful, but it also puts constraints on a business. That Optare is unlikely ever to be able to build big buses in the volumes which would secure it mainstream business with the big groups is not necessarily a weakness. Big buyers drive down prices, so may not always be good for profits.

The company has invested in its Unitec aftersales operation – it reported a 22.8 per cent increase in sales in 2004 – and that is clearly important for a business which has a large number of small customers.

Optare is a company which has shown a remarkable ability to survive. It was created in 1985, when Leyland – remember that name? – announced that it was closing the Charles H Roe bodybuilding business in Leeds. Roe had over the years primarily been a builder of double-deck buses, and in the early 1980s was selected as the plant to build Leyland's new Royal Tiger Doyen integral coach, a decision which helped lead to the factory's closure as it struggled to switch from building what were, almost, hand-crafted buses to what was intended to be a fully-engineered jig-built high-tech coach.

Enter Russell Richardson, a former plant director at Roe, who, backed by the West Yorkshire Enterprise Board and many redundant former employees, created Optare.

Sceptics wondered if it could survive, let alone prosper, as bus orders nose-dived as the British bus industry geared up for the challenges of privatisation and deregulation. But survive it did.

Under Richardson's guiding hand it introduced what can only be described as spectacular new products, particularly in the early years. The VW-based CityPacer



■ Stylish Delta still looks good.



minibus may have proved to be a triumph of style over substance, but nothing touched it in terms of customer appeal. The Delta single-decker was sleek and modern, making Leyland's Lynx look like a box. Almost 20 years on the Delta still looks good; the Lynx just looks like an old bus.

And the Spectra double-decker set new standards in design, forcing all the other builders of double-deckers to hurriedly develop if not new models, at least new front ends to emulate the Spectra's style. It took some 10 years, and the entry of Wrightbus to the market, for a design to appear which eclipsed the Spectra.

Optare joined the short-lived

United Bus organisation in the early 1990s and survived its collapse. It was then bought by NABI in 2000, a move which introduced Optare products to the North American market.

Over the years Optare has always shown the responsiveness which characterises a well-run small business. It has survived changes in ownership and maintained continuity in management first under Richardson, and now under Coombes. It has introduced genuinely innovative products.

There's optimism in the air. Small may indeed be beautiful, if the new team can maintain Optare's flair and back it up with reliable products.

■ Solo favoured by large fleets, including Stagecoach.



ISRAEL

WHAT is claimed to be the first double-deck bus to operate in Israel is now running a city tour in Jerusalem. The operation started last week, using an open-top Neoplan Skyliner painted red and operated by leading public transport company Egged.

MOROCCO

M'DINA BUS has ordered 800 Hispano Habit city buses to be delivered over the next four years. They are for operation in Casablanca. The bodies will be built on Iveco and Scania chassis by Hispano Maghreb at a new factory in the city. M'Dina bus is a consortium in which one of the partners is Paris transport operator RATP. The order marks the largest-ever project to modernise public transport in Morocco.

Ravi Kant, executive director of Indian manufacturer Tata

Motors and recently appointed chairman of Hispano says: "This development reinforces our confidence in Hispano's competency and capability to supply world class buses in Europe and outside. We expect to open new markets in North Africa and Middle East."

Earlier this year Tata acquired a 21 per cent stake in the Hispano business.



USA

NABI has completed the delivery of 30 CNG-fuelled articulated buses for Los Angeles Metro's 14-mile Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit service, due to start later this year. "Our high-capacity, rail-like designed vehicles match precisely with LA's planned BRT service," says NABI vice president of sales Bill Coryell. "It was our partnership with Metro that allowed us to create a vehicle that has the unique

features it needs to be a success on the Orange Line."

Around 2,000 of Metro's buses are powered by CNG, out of a total fleet approaching 2,500 vehicles. The 30 new vehicles are part of a 200 bus order which Metro placed with NABI.

Azure Dynamics Corporation of Vancouver has developed a hybrid electric 20-seat shuttle bus and secured an order for 5, which will be operated in New York by the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation. The vehicles will be based on a delivery van design currently available from Azure. "This innovative project demonstrates that hybrid electric technology can be applied to shuttle buses, reducing diesel emissions while providing important transportation in areas severely underserved by public transit," says Rafael Salaberrios, BOEDC president. The hybrid buses will operate between 160 and 240 miles a day, six days a week.

THE WHATCOM Transit Authority in Washington State has introduced a new service network in Bellingham, based around three colour-coded services running

every 15 minutes. "Fifteen minutes is a time increment when people will stop relying on a schedule and just walk out the door to catch the bus," says WTA community relations and marketing manager Maureen Camandona. To encourage people to try the services, all will be operating fares-free during August. The normal charge is 50c (30p).

OPTIMA Bus has unveiled its first hybrid low-floor bus; a model, which it believes, could create up to 200 additional jobs over the next five years. The new model is built to designs developed by Wrightbus of Ballymena.

THE KANSAS City Area Transportation Authority has launched a \$21million (£12million) 5.5-mile BRT service, which it is promoting as MAX - Metro Area Express. The service operates from 04:30 to 00:30, with frequencies ranging from 9 minutes to 30 minutes depending on time of day and section of route. The MAX service replaces a conventional bus route, which had 40 stops and a 24 minute running time. MAX has 19 stops, with running time

The new Solo - now shorter, long



With an entrance step lower than any other bus on the road, the Solo is designed for accessibility and real passenger appeal. But where operators were once limited in their choice of low floor vehicles, the Solo now comes in a range of lengths between 7.8 and 10.2 metres, seating between 24 and 37 passengers. Plus there's now the new SlimLine Solo - a 'narrow body' version that offers passengers and operators all the advantages of the full size Solo, but saves 130mm in the overall width.



cut to 18 minutes. The 12 new Gillig buses used on the service are fitted with GPS, providing real-time information at bus stops and giving them priority at traffic lights.



SAN FRANCISCO Muni plans to roll out a \$52million (£30million) fleet of hybrid-electric buses in the next year to help combat one of the city's most pressing environmental problems: soot pollution from diesel engines, wood-burning fires and power plants.

The plan is to replace 56 of Muni's oldest diesel buses by the end of 2006 with hybrid versions that will emit 90 per cent less soot and 30 per cent less greenhouse gases.

San Francisco voters required that Muni replace all of its pre-

1991 diesel buses under Measure I, which was passed in March 2004. Under the measure, Muni is to replace the vehicles by the end of next year, a deadline which the operator expects to meet.

"We've always taken safe, clean transportation seriously," says Muni spokeswoman Maggie Lynch. "We have the largest non-polluting fleet in the country. Over 50 per cent of our fleet is pollution-free."

NEW JERSEY Transit has ordered 289 buses from Millennium Transit Services. MTS, based in New Mexico, acquired the assets of the Nova Bus business in Rosewell last year and is developing a new range of low-entry models. The order is worth \$94million (£54million) and will see the withdrawal of 1989-built Fixible buses by NJT, as well as the expansion of some services to cope with growing bus use. Deliveries of the new vehicles from MTS start in the summer of 2006.

SAUDI ARABIA

MERCEDES-BENZ Brazil is to supply the Saudi Arabia Public Transport Company with 150 urban buses. These will have

O500M chassis and will be bodied by Marcopolo. The O500M is a rear-engined chassis powered by a 245bhp 6.4-litre OM906LA engine. Mercedes-Benz Brazil is also supplying buses to Qatar, with a shipment of 165 vehicles being delivered this month.



NEW ZEALAND

MAN has delivered its 1,000th New Zealand-built bus, a 17.223 SLF with Designline body for Stagecoach New Zealand. MAN has been assembling chassis in the country since 1980 and sales have grown rapidly since the launch of its 11.190 SLF range in 1995.

GERMANY

MAN has installed its latest D20 six-cylinder common rail engine in the Lion's City low-floor bus. Exhaust gas recirculation plus a maintenance-free PM-Kat particulate trap are being used

to meet the new Euro 4 exhaust emission regulations.

The first vehicles equipped with the 10.5-litre in-line unit go on trial in Germany this summer with local transport authorities in Munich, Nuremberg, Annaberg, and Salzgitter. Series production will start in spring 2006 in advance of Euro 4's introduction the following October. UK availability of the engine is promised for next year.

Power outputs of 270bhp, 310bhp or 350bhp are on offer. Up to 100kg lighter than the D2866 engines, all three options can be ordered with either a Voith DIWA.5 gearbox or ZF's six-speed 6 HP 502.

Adapted for horizontal installation, the four-valves-per cylinder intercooled engine has a two-cylinder compressor to supply the extra compressed air required. Three alternators are fitted in most cases along with a hydrostatically driven fan and – usually – a compressor for air conditioning.

The 6.8-litre D 0836 has been modified to comply with Euro 4, with the horizontal 280bhp unit deleted from the line-up. It will be replaced by the lowest-powered D20.

er and narrower



The SlimLine Solo is already proving popular in areas where larger buses have difficulties servicing routes with access problems. The new longer variant, with its higher payload, is also winning acclaim on higher density operations.

So, however long or wide you need your Solo to be, you know that it'll measure up perfectly.

OPTARE

IN BRIEF

Edinburgh trams

PLANS to re-introduce trams to the streets of Edinburgh have been boosted following a decision by Network Rail to withdraw its opposition to the proposals. The rail infrastructure operator was concerned about possible electrical interference from the trams. However, the city council-owned firm tie Ltd, which is promoting the scheme, has agreed to compensate Network Rail if modifications are needed. Other organisations including Royal Mail, Historic Scotland and Forth Ports have also withdrawn their objections.

First 'ftr' roadshow

FIRST GROUP backed tram-like StreetCar, built by Wrightbus and Volvo has been visiting several areas where councils are interested in introducing the new public transport concept. The StreetCar toured the streets in Bath, Bristol, Cardiff, Exeter and Plymouth last month. Already First has ordered 39 StreetCars. The first 'ftr' service will begin in York in early 2006, with Leeds expected to be the site for a second scheme.

Fastlink closure

EDINBURGH'S Fastlink Bus Rapid Transit system was closed last month because of problems with the concrete surface that buses run along. Passengers on the busway, which opened last year, are said to have complained about the ride quality onboard the buses. The £10m busway was closed while ridges in the concrete were ground down.

Weblinks

Leeds Supertram
www.leeds-supertram.co.uk
 Edinburgh Trams
www.edinburgh.co.uk
 Nottingham Express Transit
www.thetram.net
 Leigh Busway
www.gmpite.com

Fury over light rail funding

HOPES that ministers would announce funding decisions on light rail schemes before the parliamentary recess were dashed last month. Officials in Leeds, South Hampshire and on Merseyside had been lobbying for an early decision on funding for their schemes. However, despite last minute appeals by some promoters no decisions were made.

Leeds city council leader councillor Mark Harris was furious about the lack of progress on providing the much needed funding. "It is disgraceful that the government is treating Leeds in this off-hand manner."

Planners on both the Leeds Supertram and South Hants Metro have previously expressed concern that compulsory purchase powers may lapse unless a swift decision was

made.

Speaking about the Leeds scheme Mark Harris says: "Alistair Darling and DfT officials are fully aware that we are fast approaching a date beyond which the scheme will be extremely difficult to deliver."

Meanwhile promoters of the Merseytram scheme fear that

unless the scheme receives approval in the next week or so, the first line will not be ready in time for the city's Capital of Culture year.

A spokesperson for the Department for Transport said discussions were ongoing and decisions on funding were taken very seriously.



■ A computerised image of the Leeds Supertram.

System Profile

Leigh Busway - ready to go!

PLANS to create a 7km guided busway linking Leigh and Salford is finally gathering pace. Last month the Leigh Busway was granted Transport and Works Act powers. The scheme, which is similar to those being planned in Luton and Cambridge, will form part of a major Quality Bus Corridor, linking up with bus priority measures on two major highways into Manchester. The guideway will run along a disused railway.

In line with other Bus Rapid Transit schemes the service will be provided by private operators with a minimum frequency of every 10 minutes during the weekday daytime between Leigh



■ The Manchester busway linking Leigh and Salford.

and Manchester. In total, there are 17 stops along the route. They will provide high quality waiting facilities and feature

real time passenger information displays.

Chair of the PTA Roger Jones says: "The busway will form part of a high grade public transport route linking Leigh, Salford and Manchester. As well as vastly improving journey times into Manchester, the busway will offer local people a frequent, reliable bus service with door-to-door journey times that can compete with the car."

After several delays to the scheme it is now hoped that a funding approval will be given as early as December this year. This would clear the way for construction to start in the spring of 2007, with the bus service becoming operational in summer 2008.



Reporting by Peter Plisner, BBC midland's transport correspondent.

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Alan Woods, Stagecoach

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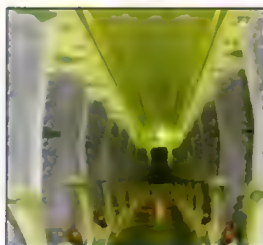
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DIARY EVENTS

Monday 12 September

Conference: Driven to extinction – how transport policy can save the world, Cambridge. 020 7787 1210.

www.thewaterfront.co.uk

Wednesday-Thursday 14-15

September Exhibition: Passenger Transport Solutions, Olympia, London. 0870 429 4694.

www.aboutpts.com

Monday-Wednesday 26-28

September Exhibition: APTA International Public Transportation Expo, Dallas, Texas.

www.apta.com

Wednesday-Thursday 5-6

October Exhibition: Coach & Bus Live 2005, NEC, Birmingham. 0870 224 8617.

www.coachandbuslive.com

Friday-Wednesday 21-26

October Exhibition: Busworld, Kortrijk. 0032 51 22 60 60.

www.busworld.org

Tuesday-Thursday 8-10

November Exhibition/Conference: Community Transport Event, G-Mex, Manchester. 08707 743586.

www.communitytransport.com

Wednesday 9 November Lunch:

UK Bus Awards ceremony, London.

www.ukbuswards.co.uk

Monday 28 November Dinner:

Scottish Transport Awards, Edinburgh. 01224 263134

www.abs.ac.uk/cftp

Tuesday 29 November

Conference: Scottish Transport Awards, Edinburgh. 01224 263134

www.abs.ac.uk/cftp

2006

Thursday-Saturday 27-29 April

Exhibition: Switch – powering future transport, Earls Court, London. 020 7370 8513

www.switchexpo.com

World's first coal-powered bus

FORGET Euro3. Forget particulate traps. Forget low-sulphur diesel. Enjoy the smell of smoke and lubricating oil. Here's a bus that makes no attempt to pander to politically-correct clean air pressure groups. It's a 1932 Sentinel and it runs on coal.

It started life in 1932 as a truck, but has recently been rebuilt with a replica bus body by Stuart Harrison from Cumbria and is now operating as a tourist attraction in the Morecambe area. To do this, of course, it needs to be certified, and that involves having it tilt-tested



■ 1932 Sentinel coal bus being tilted.

Those were the days . . .



REMEMBER the Leyland Titan? It was one of Leyland's Great Hopes in the 1970s, the integral double-deck bus which would revolutionise the bus business and which everyone would want to buy.

In the event, most were sold to London Transport, but small numbers went elsewhere, including Reading Transport, as seen here in the town centre with MCW's rival Metrobus following behind. Reading bought 12 Titans. The only other operators outside London to take new Titans were Greater Manchester Transport, West Midlands Travel and China Motor Bus, which received the only Titan to be exported.

The Titan was available with a choice of Gardner 6LXB or Leyland TL11 engines, and used Leyland's new – and inadequately proven – Hydracyclic gearbox which featured an integral retarder, a novel feature when the Titan was launched.

Although it didn't have a step-free entrance, Leyland's design team did a lot of work with elderly people to ensure that the Titan's layout was as good as it could be – human factors engineering, they called it. The deep lower deck windows were designed so that standing passengers could see out.

Series production started in 1978 and ended in 1984, and fewer than 1,200 were built.

with a simulated load of 32 passengers, driver and fireman, along with 150 gallons of water and a half bunker full of coal.

Enter Optare, which is one of the few locations in the north of England with a tilt table.

"This is a bit of an unusual job for us," says operations director Glenn Saint, "but one that we are very pleased to assist with."

Operator Budgie Transport says that it is the world's only steam bus and that's not a claim I feel qualified to argue with, although I've certainly never come across any others. If you want to know where it's operating, visit www.budgietransport.co.uk

Judge overturns TfL policy

A FEW months back – in the issue dated 1 April, which seems strangely appropriate – I commented on Transport for London's decision not to accept further on-bus advertising for Turkish-controlled northern Cyprus, following complaints from Greek Cypriots.

Well, the North Cyprus Tourism Centre took umbrage and took TfL to court, and succeeded in having the ban lifted. Judge Mr Justice Newman described TfL's decision as irrational and awarded costs to the North Cyprus Tourism Centre.

TfL's decision was odd. I wonder, now, if it would accept holiday adverts from Zimbabwe, Burma or China – all countries with regimes which have caused offence to greater or lesser numbers of people in recent times...

Arriva united

WHAT unites the names Shamrock, Oxonian, Prince of Wales, Union, Hibernia and Victory, which will soon be appearing on Arriva Midlands park-and-ride buses on Shrewsbury? Sounds a bit like a pub quiz question – are they pubs... or ships? Well, no, they were stagecoaches (that's with a small 's', nothing to do with one of Arriva's rival transport groups).

The decision was made to give names to the buses used on the Shrewsbury park-and-ride, with a competition to suggest a theme. And the winner, one Peter Brown of Market Drayton, came up with a transport-related suggestion, which caught the judges' eyes.

Bradtech launches Vikan cleaning brushes

SPECIALISTS in the development of water systems for buses and coaches, Bradtech has launched its new range of cleaning brushes from Vikan.

The brushes can be water-fed or used as dipping brushes and are designed to ensure that the brush filaments are in contact with the vehicle surface for longer periods.

Many of the brushes are also fitted with rubber edges to guard against accidental scratching.

Bradtech managing director William Bradburn says: "We wanted to introduce a cleaning system that would make a real difference to both coach and bus operators. We chose Vikan because their brushes are specially designed for cleaning commercial vehicles."

"The weight of the brushes means they are easier to work back and forth and speeds up the



■ A Vikan brush with water-feed.

cleaning operation."

Bradtech also offers a range of brushes, including wheel rim to bodywork brushes.

Until the end of August, Stafford-based Bradtech is offering a 20 per cent introductory discount on the Vikan range.

📞 01785 282800
www.bradtech.ltd.uk

Thamesdown's solution to stacking

SWINDON bus operator Thamesdown Transport is using the Manuvit LEV adjustable width stacker, supplied by Berkshire-based manual handling equipment specialist Southworth Handling.

The stackers allow a variety of loads to be handled with minimal effort. Thamesdown required an easy solution to handle wheels on and off bus axles and bring them safely to floor level with the use of a single operator.

A special cradle helps support the wheels and rollers on the tips of the lift forks, which allow the operator to align the wheel with the mounting studs. Both the wheel cradle and tall mast prevent the wheel from tipping backwards during the operation.

Thamesdown engineering director Nigel Mason says: "With manual handling high on the

health and safety agenda and vehicle lifts becoming more prominent in workshops these days, the LEV stacker has proven to be an important tool, ensuring heavy wheels are lifted and fitted correctly."

📞 Southworth Handling
01635 874404,
www.southworth.co.uk

■ Thamesdown Manuvit LEV stacker unit.



Eberspächer launches the new Madrid

HAMPSHIRE-based Eberspächer will be exhibiting its new Madrid roof-mounted air conditioning unit at the Coach and Bus Live show at the NEC from 5 October.

The unit is suitable for most coaches and buses with a seating capacity of up to 35 seats. Each system includes a Seltec TM31 compressor complete with compressor mounting bracket,

hoses, fitting, wiring and all auxiliary components.

The Madrid joins a wide range of smaller, external, roof-mounted units, which include the Turin and Remini units, specifically manufactured for smaller vehicles.

📞 01425 480151,
www.eberspacher.com

Support literature introduced by Unwin

PASSENGER safety specialist Unwin Safety Systems has introduced its latest customer support literature following the Mobility Roadshow in July.

The Unwin product sheet offers detailed information on four new safety products. Unwin Xtract enhances operational versatility in minibuses and coaches; Quattro Express describes the self tensioning and self retracting wheelchair restraint for secure handling; Easilok III offers a combined fold up bus seat and wheelchair restraint for optimum flexibility and comfort; and the Unwin M1 T-Bold seat locking device.

Unwin has been working closely with passenger and wheelchair

restraint systems specialist Puwertec which has provided an on-site audit and provides the company with after care service.

📞 01935 827740,
www.unwin-safety.com



Low-floor operators boost Pasquin air jack sales

A GROWING band of low-floor bus operators are the latest to convert to the Pasquin air-hydraulic jack produced by Beissbarth – one of the leaders in automotive service equipment.

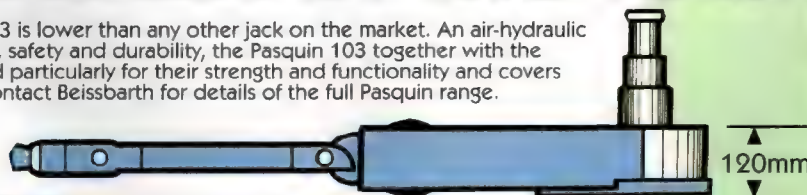
First Bus, Go North East, Stagecoach and Arriva Nottingham have all acquired the product for its strength and functionality.

Pasquin jacks are operated by a double-acting pump and are provided with safety devices in order to avoid overloads. The large base ensures stability, while the diameter of the wheels and the three-position handle allow easy and safe handling.

📞 Beissbarth 0800 1694660 www.beissbarth.co.uk

The lowest of the low.

At 120mm, the Pasquin 103 is lower than any other jack on the market. An air-hydraulic jack with proven reliability, safety and durability, the Pasquin 103 together with the P105 and P182C are noted particularly for their strength and functionality and covers all commercial vehicles. Contact Beissbarth for details of the full Pasquin range.



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A cleaner solution

Steve Banner reports exclusively for *Bus and Coach Professional* on emissions technology and other developments at Neoman.

Operators wrestling with the complexities of Euro 4, Euro 5 and beyond may be about to be hit by another, separate, suite of regulations demanding reduced exhaust emissions warns MAN.

Since January city authorities in Germany have been insisting that certain set concentrations of ultra-small PM10 particles in the atmosphere – often referred to as ‘fine dust’ – must not be exceeded on more than 35 days in a year. Limits on the annual average level of particles permitted are being imposed too.

By doing so they’re implementing EU air quality directives 1996/62/EC and 1999/30/EC.

As a consequence vehicles not fitted with particulate traps could face being banned from urban areas warns MAN senior

vice president, engineering, Karl Viktor Schaller. That’s despite the fact that industry emits far more fine dust than diesel engines, households emit high levels too, and that there seems to be no direct link between fine dust concentrations and emission sources.

“It can be found in rural areas without dense traffic and its presence seems to have a lot to do with factors such as weather conditions and agricultural activities,” he observes. “While there is a contribution from vehicles, they are by no means wholly responsible.”

Neoman points out that buses account for no more than one per cent of the entire impact. That’s unlikely to save them from the spotlight, even though VDV, the association for German transport companies, calculates that each

passenger in a fully occupied 12m bus accounts for up to 400 times less fine dust than an individual car driver in a diesel car without a particulate filter.

Given that they are relying on an EC directive, the stance taken by German cities could be replicated elsewhere in Europe, including the UK. TfL has already announced plans for a London-wide Low Emission Zone, and although details are vague at present the indications are that it would involve applying Euro 3 emission levels in every London borough.

Cars would be exempt, despite the fact that they constitute 94

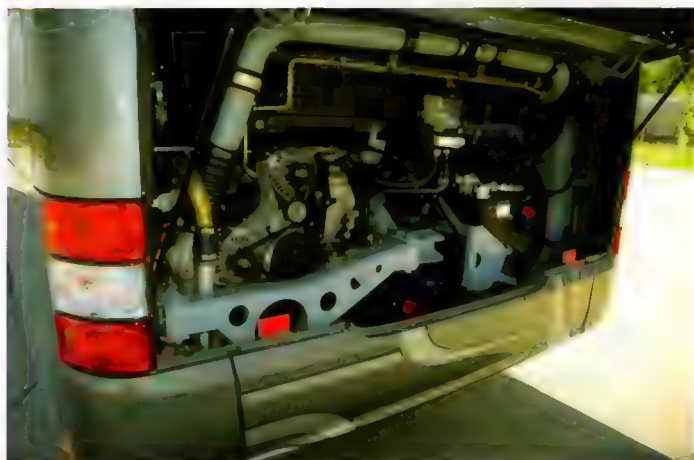
per cent of traffic in the capital.

So far as MAN is concerned one solution for operators faced with local pressure to cut particle output may be to fit the PM-KAT continuously self-regenerating trap now being installed on its Euro 4-compliant D20 bus engines. It adds about 10kg to the vehicle’s weight.

When fitted to a Euro 4 engine it cuts particle emissions by 80 per cent, says Schaller. Retrofit it to a Euro 3 engine – a package should be available from autumn 2005 – and the cut will be nearer 50 to 60 per cent.

“That’s not enough by itself to take the engine from Euro 3 to

■ **MAN Lion’s City Bus with D20 engine.**



MAN remains firmly wedded to EGR as the way forward for buses and coaches to meet Euro 5 as well as Euro 4 emission regulations.





Industry emits far more fine dust than diesel engines and there seems to be no direct link between fine dust concentrations and emission sources.

Dr Karl Viktor Schaller

MAN senior vice president, engineering.



Euro 4, but it makes a substantial contribution towards cleaning up emissions," he says.

"PM-Kat employs a sintered metal fibre fleece that's so fine you can read a newspaper through it," he continues. "The particles it collects through deliberate generation of turbulence are oxidised and leave the exhaust as carbon dioxide."

As a consequence particulate values fall below the Euro 4 and Euro 5 limit of 0.02g/kWh. That's approximately one-fifth of the Euro 3 standard.

"PM-Kat is tamper-proof, it won't clog and it's maintenance-free too," says Schaller. "It fits 100 per cent within the envelope of the silencer."

An alternative to retrofitting a PM-Kat to a Euro 3 engine could be to equip it with a CRTec closed-loop particulate filter, he says. "It's electronically-controlled and it's especially suitable for city buses in circumstances where exhaust temperatures don't get high enough to allow a filter to work properly."

"So far as Euro 2 engines are concerned we can offer an external soot filter sourced from Twin Tec."

The bad news is the price of some of these retrofit solutions – £2,000 to £3,500 for a PM-Kat rising to a painful £10,000 for a CRTec. The latter is not maintenance-free and has to be cleaned out once a year.

MAN remains firmly wedded to EGR – exhaust gas recirculation – as the way for buses and coaches to meet Euro 5 as well as Euro 4, Schaller stresses.

While it has developed an SCR – Selective Catalytic Reduction – Euro 5 solution for trucks as a temporary expedient, it won't be fitted to passenger vehicles, and will be succeeded by an EGR package.

Due to be introduced in 2009 for first registrations, Euro 5 will see the NOx limit cut from the Euro 4 limit of 3.5g/kWh to 2g/kWh. The particulate limit will remain unchanged.

Something that will change is stricter monitoring of a vehicle's compliance with the exhaust emission rules while in service says Roland von Hoerner, in charge of engine development at MAN's Nuremberg plant.

It must be possible to verify that a Euro 4 engine's emissions are stable for at least the first 500,000km of the vehicle's life, he points out. That involves the manufacturer fitting an onboard diagnosis system that will keep a check on them, and that from late 2007 will cut the engine's power output by from 60 to 75 per cent if NOx limits are exceeded.

To achieve Euro 5 with EGR MAN will again use a PM-Kat trap and will opt for two-stage turbocharging with inter- and after-cooling, says von Hoerner.

None of this should be taken to suggest that MAN has given up on developing vehicles that will run on alternative fuels. While diesel is still likely to be the dominant bus and coach power source in 20 years time, other choices such as hydrogen will be more important than they are today, predicts Eberhard Hipp, responsible for the company's



■ **An illustrated MAN D20 common rail poly V-belt engine.**

advanced development division.

Partly that's because of the need to cut greenhouse gas emissions. Partly however it's because worldwide oil and gas reserves are concentrated in the unstable Middle East.

Three MAN low-floor articulated buses powered by hydrogen and equipped with 190bhp H 2866 UH internal combustion engines have been in service at Munich Airport for the past six years, says Hipp. They're all fitted with roof-mounted aluminium tanks that store the compressed fuel at a pressure of 250 bar. The buses emit zero carbon dioxide along with low levels of other pollutants, beating Euro 5 on NOx. Between them they've covered over 400,000kms.

As an extension of this project a similar bus – a rigid this time – has just gone into service on commuter routes near the airport alongside a fuel cell bus. Like the airport buses the project is sponsored by the Bavarian Ministry of Transport under the ARGEMUC banner, and both vehicles will refuel at the airport's publicly accessible hydrogen filling station.

BVG – Berlin's transport authority – has been operating a hydrogen bus too. "The engine used is approaching series production maturity," says Hipp.

■ **Continued on page 18**



The MAN low-floor articulated buses emit zero carbon dioxide along with low levels of other pollutants, beating Euro 5 on Nox.





Due to be introduced in 2009 for first registrations, Euro 5 will see the Nox limit cut from the Euro 4 limit of 3.5kg/kWh to 2g/kWh.



A bit more power is required however, so MAN is developing a supercharged version.

The fuel cell bus employs a 68kW PEM fuel cell from Ballard and a 140kW electrical energy storage system that makes use of the energy generated by the vehicle's brakes. The hydrogen the system needs is carried on rooftop tanks at 350 bar, and the bus has a range of around 300km.

One key advantage of opting for hydrogen only rather than hydrogen and fuel cells is that the latter remain extremely expensive, says Hipp. "Nor do we believe that they'll come down in price in the near future," he observes. "However buses powered by them may be ready for series production in about ten years time."

MAN has also been involved in the development of a diesel-electric bus, and over 2,500 buses with MAN compressed natural gas engines – they form the basis of the hydrogen engine – are now in operation. The company continues to build trolleybuses too, Hipp adds, and was involved in supplying 142 to ILPAP, the Athens transport authority, in 2004.

"Remember that a number of cities in northern Italy, such as Parma, have banned diesel buses from their historic centres," he observes. "Most Western European operators see trolleybuses as a way of bridging the gap until fuel cell technology has reached maturity."

As well as developing engine technology, MAN is working on a number of packages aimed at improving driver and passenger safety.

Lane Guard will be going into series production for coach applications from next year. If the driver starts to wander out of his lane on the motorway then sensors will detect what's happening and the relevant side of the driver's seat will vibrate to warn him or her to take corrective action.

Adaptive Cruise Control will be available too, adapting the coach's speed to that of the vehicle in front and ensuring the driver keeps a safe distance from it.

For the future MAN is developing a system that will detect the presence of a cyclist alongside the vehicle when the driver is about to turn.

It's also working on a combination of several sensors that will recognise and trace other vehicles in the immediate vicinity in a bid to minimise the risk of collisions. That's as well as a system that will tell whoever is at the wheel if they can change lane or carry out an avoiding manoeuvre without risk.

That's not to mention a device that will actively ensure the vehicle stays in lane, as well as a vehicle-to-vehicle communications system that will warn drivers in the area about traffic jams and other obstructions.

All of which makes you wonder how soon it will be before they get around to replacing the driver completely...



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■ PM-Kat continuously self-regenerating trap adds about 10kg to the vehicle's weight.



■ Chemical illustration of exhaust emissions via the PM-Kat emission trap.

■ MAN supplied 142 trolley buses to ILPAP, the Athens transport authority in 2004.





One of the goals listed in Cardiff Buses' five-year business plan is to become 'the best public transport operator in Britain within three years'.



Delivering a community dividend

With a successful route network and a relatively new low-floor fleet, Cardiff Bus' MD still believes there is room for improvement. **Gavin Booth** hitches a ride with David Brown.

Cardiff Bus believes in reaching for the stars. One of the goals listed in its five-year business plan is to become 'the best public transport operator in Britain within three years'. Cardiff Bus managing director David Brown smiles as he explains: "We want to be bus operator of the year in 2007". Brown's predecessor, Alan Kreppel, had done much to turn the company's fortunes round and Brown, who was Kreppel's finance director, aims to take the company to even greater heights.

In the past few years Cardiff Bus has enjoyed year-on-year increases in turnover and passenger journeys and has spent an average of £3million a year on new buses. Currently there is a rolling programme of new vehicle investment costing around £4million annually, and the company plans to invest £18million over the next four years in new vehicles and equipment.

Cardiff passengers are enjoying the fruits of this investment in the shape of a substantial fleet of Pointer Darts, which operate the principal routes. There is also a batch of Alexander Dennis Enviro300s, though the next purchases are likely to be dramatically different. "We are currently talking to Scania about an order for OmniCity artics," says Brown, "and we are using Ray

Stenning of Best Impressions to design the livery and the internal look. They will be very different from the rest of the fleet as we want to attract car users on to public transport."

The artics are likely to be used on the busy corridor west to Ely, which Brown hopes will be the city's first statutory quality bus partnership. The artics would be the Cardiff Bus contribution, with Cardiff council providing bus priority measures and parking restrictions. "With these measures in place we can greatly improve reliability on this corridor and knock five or six minutes off the journey time to the city centre," says Brown.

The local bus network was simplified in Alan Kreppel's time and is described as The Cardiff Overground, a cheeky poke at First, Kreppel's former employer. Brown feels that this gives him the chance to concentrate on the other factors that can build on this legacy. As well as the statutory quality bus partnerships he identifies three key areas – an effective parking enforcement policy based on decriminalisation of parking controls, a new central transport interchange, and park-and-ride facilities.

A new transport interchange would replace the existing down-at-heel bus station, which has the advantage of being situated



Cardiff Bus managing director David Brown.

Continued on page 20



We are currently talking to Scania about an order for OmniCity artics and we are using Ray Stenning of Best Impressions to design the livery and internal look.

David Brown, Cardiff Bus.



adjacent to Cardiff Central rail station. David Brown shows plans of the proposed new interchange, which he hopes can be built on a prominent site that is easy to find and use, and allows seamless interchange with rail services. The vision is a European-style interchange with state-of-the-art passenger facilities, an airport-style concourse, real-time signage and a CCTV-monitored safe environment.

Brown believes strongly in staff motivation. "We are fortunate that industrial relations are good," he says, "but it's not just about money for our staff. We want to make their working conditions as attractive as we can, so we are looking at things like canteen facilities.

"We have more than 500 drivers and the main place they

gather is in the canteen in the centre of the city, but it's not ideal. Think of what motorway service areas were like a few years ago and it's a bit like that.

"Our staff deserve decent facilities to relax in a pleasant atmosphere with good food available. It's all about having a motivated workforce.

"We are determined to achieve Investors in People status by the end of the year and to be more flexible about working arrangements to suit different lifestyles. We are adopting a process of partnership working with the unions, centred on openness and trust.

"Later this year we'll have in place a comprehensive set of employment policies and procedures covering all aspects of employee relations. Our target is

to be recognised by 2009 as one of the top 100 UK companies to work for and to be one of the top ten in Wales by 2007."

Brown is passionate about the importance of investing in his staff, but he is careful not to lose sight of the customer – "at the heart of our business plan", he says. "A key objective is to maximise passenger growth, with a target of up to 3 per cent passenger growth year on year over the next four years.

"We know that we're well rated in terms of the service we provide, but we want to be even better, so we need to understand more about our existing and potential customers and what they are

looking for in our service.

"We're appointing a customer care manager to manage our relationships with passengers in the area of sales, customer feedback and customer care training."

The Cardiff Overground core network of high-frequency, easy-to-understand routes has proved successful and will be extended where this is commercially viable. But Brown sounds the warning that "we will be able to achieve further quantum leaps in service provision only if the problem of traffic congestion is addressed".

Cardiff council is planning to develop park-and-ride sites across the city, but Brown sees



Cardiff council is planning to develop park-and-ride sites across the city, but Brown sees an opportunity to discuss further sites with the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan councils.



an opportunity to discuss further sites with the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan councils.

As one of the select band of local authority-owned bus companies, Cardiff Bus pays a financial dividend to Cardiff council, and argues that it also pays a community dividend – the network of marginal services it provides in the early mornings, late at nights and on Sundays – which Brown estimates have a financial value to the city of around £1million a year, providing major benefits in terms of improved social inclusion and greater economic prosperity through improved access to jobs and leisure opportunities.

As capital of Wales and home to the Welsh Assembly Government, Cardiff is a thriving city. It is very much the focal centre for South Wales and enjoys good road and rail links with the rest of Wales and into England.

There are opportunities for growth based on the expanding Cardiff Bay area, home to the National Assembly as well as to a growing range of leisure and residential facilities.

The Bay is physically separated from the city centre by railway bridges and the road network, and Brown is keen to make public transport to the area more

attractive for locals and visitors.

Cardiff Bus is in the fortunate position that it has a route network that has been recently overhauled and a fleet of modern low-floor single-deck buses.

Its only double-deckers now are Volvo Ailsas kept primarily for school services, but Brown has a vision of modern double-deckers handling work like this, to give younger people a positive slant on bus travel. The Scania artics would also represent a substantial change from the current vehicle policy.

But even with a successful route network and a relatively new low floor fleet, Brown is striving to improve Cardiff Bus, through less tangible areas that you sense are important to him – improving staff conditions, monitoring passenger satisfaction – as well as those things that can be delivered if the will is there – parking restrictions, bus priorities, a new transport interchange.

And if it all happens, David Brown probably has a shelf-space in mind for that 2007 award . . .





Instrument control

Vehicles are now being equipped with multiple electronic units for new technologies to retrieve and transmit data across wireless networks. **Steve Banner** asks whether in the future there will be a single black box.

Can a single black box be used to control every function on a bus or coach? Wayfarer reckons that's perfectly possible.

It used the recent UITP congress to highlight its plug-and-play e-bus concept.

A central open platform unit employing either Windows or Linux acts as a server to drive all the onboard applications and transmit data across a wireless network. It's married to a touch-screen driver interface that controls everything from ticketing and the reversing cameras to real-time passenger information and the CCTV system; Wayfarer has recently launched its own CCTV package under the Transcam banner.

The common platform makes it easy for functions such as fare collection to be added, says Wayfarer, while features such as

GPS, GPRS and Wireless LAN can be fitted as standard.

"Mass transit operators around the world use an increasingly diverse range of technologies to drive operational requirements," says Wayfarer group managing director Tony McNamara. "It's common to find systems controlling passenger counting, smart card use, engine management and diagnostics and so on all separately installed and wired in a single vehicle. What we're providing is a pathway for all these current technologies and future technologies too."

It's an approach that's already been adopted by Wright Group. Working with ACIS, it's now installing a universal platform in its bodies and StreetCar is one of the early beneficiaries.

"In recent years there has been a distinct move away from retrofit to installing our equipment at



■ Communications systems can control a wide range of functions.

the time of build," says ACIS managing director Ian Buckley; a trend which, if replicated across the industry, is sure to have long-term implications for suppliers without OE contracts.

Wrightbus is supporting the integrated system through its Customcare offshoot. "It will be a Wrightbus product," says a company spokesman.

With standard communication protocols imminent, one of the big advantages of providing a universal platform is that buses don't have to go through an expensive and time-consuming retrofit programme if they're transferred from one fleet to another, Wrightbus contends.

It also means a reduced number of connections – the more connections there are,

the more problems you're likely to have – and less time taken up installing systems when the vehicle is originally built. "Using a single black box should make it a bit cheaper too," remarked one industry supplier.

ACIS special projects manager, Matthew Smith, strongly doubts that buses will end up with just one black box controlling all functions. "The closest you'll get to that is one box, but with two separate processors and no common platform," he predicts.

"There's a big difference between mission-critical items such as the brakes and non-mission-critical nice-to-haves such as RTPI. They work in very different ways and the

■ Continued on page 24



One concern for the operator is what might happen if the control unit experiences a sudden and total failure. It's likely to leave the vehicle completely paralysed.



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architecture of the two types of system isn't the same.

"So far as coaches are concerned though one thing that can't be integrated is the tachograph," points out Actia UK managing director, Paul Kay. "The way the legislation is written means that it's got to be a stand-alone unit."

Intellitec sales and marketing director Duncan Hughes agrees that the trend is in favour of a single unit, but only up to a point. Vehicle manufacturers aren't too enthusiastic about having the unit that also controls, say, the destination displays having anything to do with controlling the engine, gearbox and brakes, he points out.

While that may be more feasible on an integral vehicle, it's less likely to be possible if a bodybuilder is mounting a body on an externally sourced chassis. "The chassis makers have their own coded data and while they don't mind other onboard systems listening to the signals, they certainly don't want them talking to their units," Hughes observes. "As a consequence you end up with two separate control systems."

So why are chassis makers so concerned?

They argue that there's a risk that signals relating to, say, the CCTV cameras could interfere with, for example, the brakes, and it's a risk they don't want to



Chassis makers argue that signals relating to say, the CCTV cameras could interfere with, for example, the brakes, and it's one risk they don't want to take.



Continued on page 26



The StreetCar incorporates an integrated system for electronic equipment.

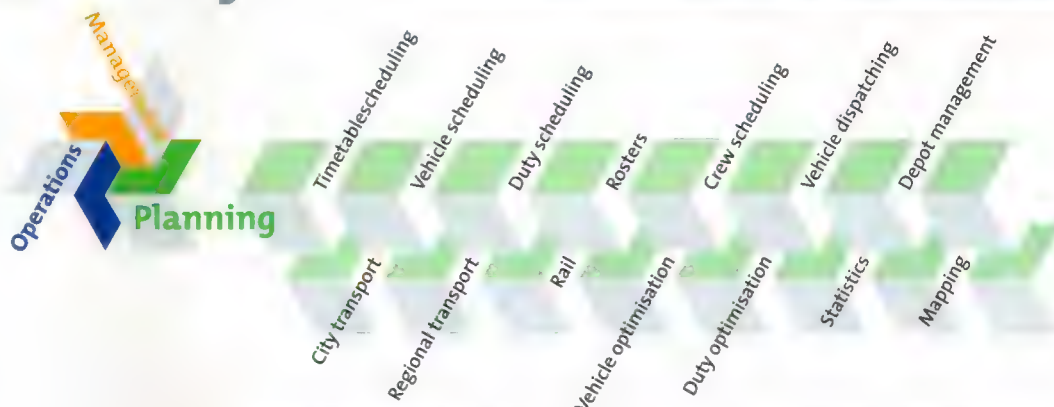


Wright Group, working with ACIS, is now installing a universal platform in its bodies and StreetCar is one of the early beneficiaries.



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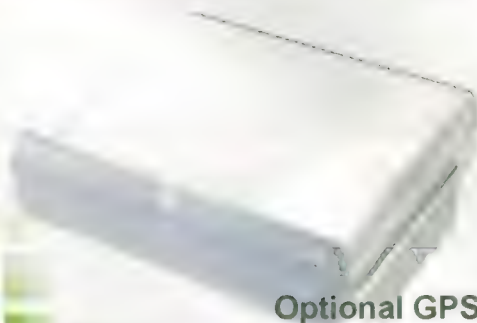
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take. As a consequence anything linked with the engine and so on has to meet particularly demanding protocols.

Despite all the talk of standard communications protocols, the majority of peripheral functions don't match the requirements of the major component manufacturers and seem unlikely to do so in the near future without considerable, costly, work.

One concern for the operator is what might happen if the control unit experiences a sudden and total failure. It's likely to leave the vehicle completely paralysed. Modern technology means that this is unlikely to occur however because the onboard diagnostic systems would give the driver enough warning to get the bus or coach off the road and into a workshop, says East Lancashire Coachbuilders.

While opting for a single control system makes sense on the grounds of reduced cost and complexity it requires an extremely powerful processor says Alistair Aitken, UK sales manager at Almex. "Remember that CCTVs need a large memory and you've external communication systems to contend with too," he comments.

Almex's Optima ticket machine can be interfaced with automatic vehicle location systems and includes a wireless LAN option. "However we're not planning to develop it as a central server," he says.

Extra memory can be acquired reasonably cheaply these days though, and while major component makers aren't prepared to brook any interference from what they view as peripheral items, information on what these items are up to can be recorded on their units.

Now with the ability to log 40 times more data than its predecessors, Voith's DIWA.5 transmission can retain information on everything from how long the bus has been standing still to the impact running the air-conditioning

system is having on fuel consumption. That's thanks to its E 300 electronic control unit. The information can be read via its ALADIN diagnostic software.

If a single control unit isn't a suitable way forward, then perhaps grouping certain functions in the way Optima does will be the route some operators will want to pursue.

"Certainly it makes sense to have one onboard system that can collect all the information required by home base and relay it," says Kay. "If you don't you end up with too many antennae."



■ Plug-and-play e-bus concept from Wayfarer.



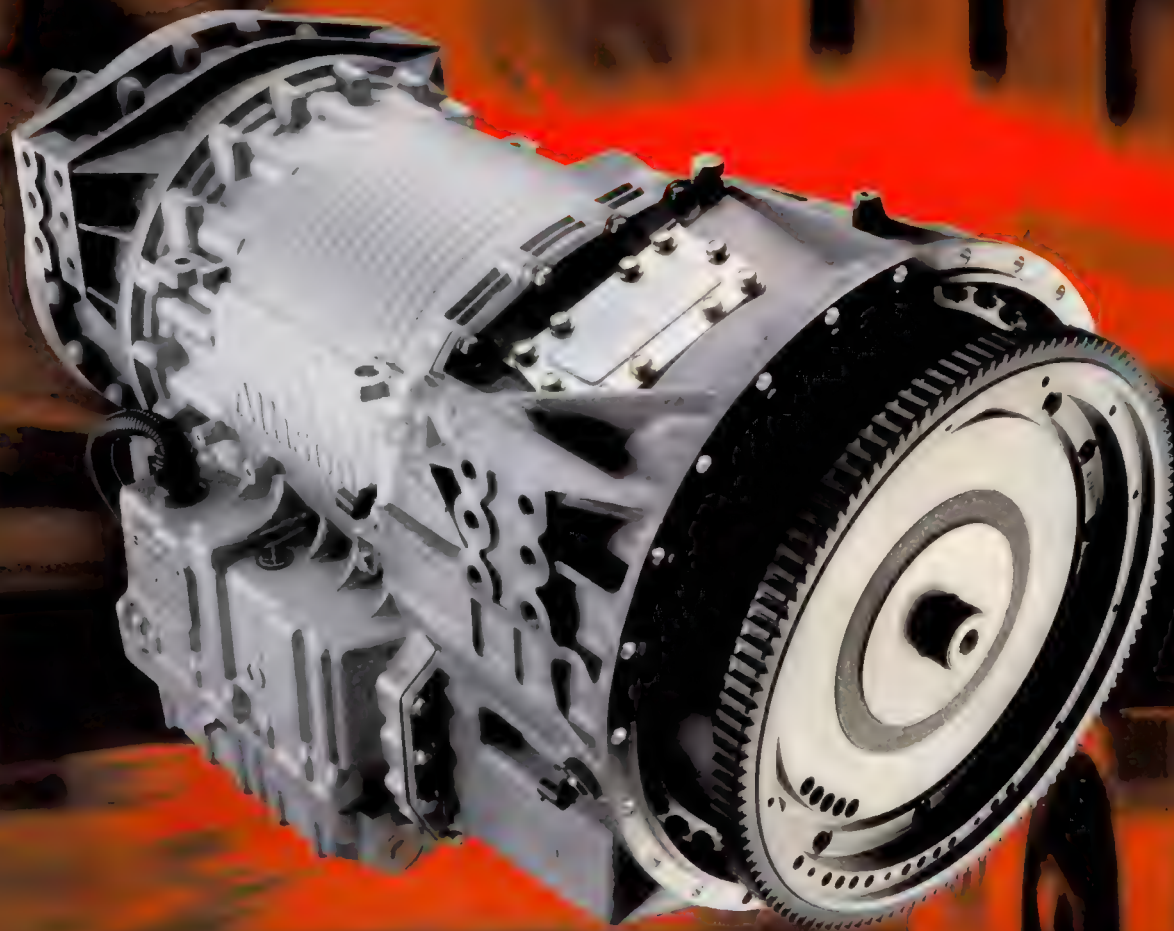
If a single control unit isn't a suitable way forward, then perhaps grouping certain functions in the way Optima does will be the route some operators will want to pursue.



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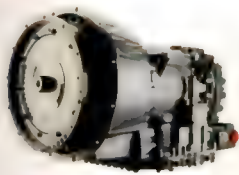
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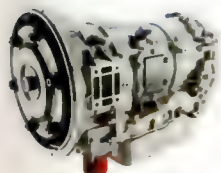
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Quick shifting

Automated manual transmissions for smaller vehicles and new units for Euro 4 and hybrid applications are amongst the developments in the transmissions market. **Steve Banner** reports.

■ *Continued on page 30.*

Every producer of base vehicles for minibus conversion seems to be introducing an optional automated manual transmission.

For some time Ford and Mercedes-Benz have been offering one on, respectively, Transit and Sprinter. Transit's is called Durashift, while Sprinter's is called Sprintshift.

Last year saw Iveco/Irisbus launch one on the Daily under the Agile banner. 2004 also witnessed the unveiling of Renault's Quickshift6 and Vauxhall's Tecshift.

The former is on offer on Trafic and Master, the latter on Vivaro and Movano. Both Quickshift6 and Tecshift share the same design, one consequence of a long standing joint venture between Renault and General Motors, Vauxhall's parent.

All these boxes offer the driver the choice of using them as

either an automatic or a manual. There's no clutch pedal, because one isn't required. Manual or automatic, you can go up and down the box without constantly exercising your left leg.

So why would you want one of these boxes on, say, a 17-seater minibus?

Supporters of automated manual transmissions argue that they make stop/start urban driving less of a chore and result in extended clutch life. Renault and Vauxhall go further, and say that specifying their system will also lead to lower fuel consumption.

"It will fall by from 8 to 10 per cent depending on the model concerned," says a Renault spokesman.

"We would expect real-world savings provided by Durashift to be in the region of 5 to 10 per cent, including improved clutch life as well as reduced fuel consumption," says Ford

of Britain commercial vehicle marketing manager, Jon Fisher.

The drawback for many operators is the front-end price. Quickshift6 for instance will add an extra £800 to your invoice, while Ford's Durashift will bump the total up by £1,000.

Some prospective purchasers may also fear that specifying what remains a novel option will harm residual values. Nor are they necessarily convinced by promises of extended clutch life. Clutches are so durable these days that premature failure is rarely an issue.

As a consequence sales volumes are modest. "We only sell a few hundred Durashifts a year," says Fisher.

Yet the ability to switch to automatic mode is likely to give passengers a smoother ride than even the most skilled minibus driver is able to offer with a manual box; and those fuel savings, if verifiable, are worth having.

It was with these thoughts in mind that *Bus and Coach Professional* got to grips with a Master equipped with a Quickshift6 transmission.

Gearchanges and engagement and disengagement of the clutch are automated by means of a computer plus transducers. Engine speed and torque output are controlled by a second computer to ensure smooth changes.

■ *Renault Quickshift6 transmission.*



All these gearboxes offer the driver the choice of using them as either an automatic or a manual.



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The Torqmatic automatic gearbox is proving a popular choice among operators opting for Optare Tempos and Alexander Dennis Enviro 300s.

Dennis Priddy, Allison.



Derived from Renault's six-speed manual box, it's a remarkably easy system to use. All you need to do to switch from automatic to manual mode, and back again, is tap the dashboard-mounted joystick.

When you're in manual you pull the stick towards you to go down the box, and push it away to go back up again. Nor do you have to lift your foot off the accelerator pedal while doing so.

To slip into reverse you move the stick to the right then back towards you while planting your foot firmly on the brake pedal.

If you're not sure which mode or gear you're in, all you need to do is glance at the dashboard display.

You can select either 'load' or 'snow' settings by flicking a dashboard switch.

'Load' alters the gear change threshold points and reduces clutch slip, and is intended for use when the vehicle is heavily laden with a full complement of passengers and a mountain of luggage. 'Snow' limits wheelspin when you're moving away from rest and can only be selected when you're in automatic mode.

The transmission 'creeps', which is an aid to hill starts. A kickdown function familiar to users of conventional automatic boxes allows you to accelerate rapidly when overtaking.

While Quickshift6's gear changes are smooth and quiet no matter whether you select automatic or manual, in both modes low speed manoeuvring can be nervous and jerky. Furthermore, many drivers may feel happier resorting to the manual option when descending steep hills.

How about diesel usage?

Powered by a 115bhp 2.5-litre four-cylinder 16-valve common rail diesel, the medium-wheelbase medium-roof vehicle sampled returned approximately 34mpg. That's 2mpg to 3mpg better than one might expect to achieve with a Master fitted with a six-speed manual gearbox.

■ **Fully automatic gearbox is also available for Mercedes Sprinter minibuses.**



■ **Volvo I-shift transmission for coaches.**

As for extra servicing, all the Quickshift6 box requires is a lubricant level check when Master comes into the workshop for routine servicing.

So why opt for an automated manual box rather than the more familiar torque converter epicyclic automatic box? Because it's cheaper and easier to repair.

From the manufacturer's viewpoint it's as easy to fit to the vehicle on the production line as a manual box.

Transmission manufacturers have had to develop strategies to cope with Euro 4, and ZF has just unveiled Ecomat 2 Plus. It's a modified Ecomat designed to cope with the hotter coolant temperatures associated with Euro 4 engines and the impact they have on gearbox operating temperatures.

Ecomat 2 Plus also features an EST 146/147 electronic control unit that provides adaptive shift control and records operating statistics. Technicians can download data on everything from the amount of time spent in each gear to the driver's use of the retarder.

This allows the vehicle's operating profile to be compared with SORT cycles, the latest European operating cycle

comparison figures. Poor driving techniques can be identified as a consequence and addressed through training.

Perhaps surprisingly, chassis manufacturers can install Ecomat 2 Plus in buses that don't feature CAN-based communications systems. "That means the benefits of the transmission can be achieved in vehicles, typically in developing countries, that do not have the latest standards of electronic architecture," says a ZF spokesman.

One wonders whether those developing countries will make full use of ZF Ecofluid A Plus, the newly-introduced synthetic automatic transmission fluid that's recommended for use in Ecomat 2 Plus. It forms part of a new range of ZF lubricants developed with improved performance and longer drain intervals in mind.

Moving up the weight scale, some of the first Voith compact DV500 automatic transmissions to go into service in the UK have been installed in five Alexander Dennis Darts acquired by Epsom Buses.

"We've got a number of other firms trying DV500, and in one case a bus fitted with it is achieving 4 to 5 per cent better fuel consumption than one

equipped with a competitor's package," says Voith UK sales and marketing manager John Domigan. "We believe some operators will see improvements in brake pad life too."

Just over 500mm long and with a compact heat exchanger that forms part of the casing – there are no external hoses – the three-speed transmission and its integral retarder will cope with up to 1,200Nm of torque.

"The complete package only weighs 300kg and doesn't require a fully-synthetic lubricant," says Domigan. "A semi-synthetic is fine."

Stagecoach is trying DV500 on a branded route in Portsmouth while London General and Blue Triangle are sampling it too. "The diagnostic system is the same as the one fitted to DIWA.5," says Domigan.

The company's DIWA.5 transmission has yet to make its British debut however. "It will appear initially in Alexander Dennis chassis in time for the introduction of Euro 4," says Domigan. "We're just completing trials with Volvo too."

"It will be suitable for both SCR – Selective Catalytic Reduction – and EGR – Exhaust Gas Recirculation – applications."

■ **Continued on page 31.**

Turning to Allison, its Torqmatic automatic gearbox is proving a popular choice among operators opting for Optare Tempos and Alexander Dennis Enviro 300s says Dennis Priddy, area manager, European bus. In his view it's the quality of the gearchange that's the key influencing factor.

"We employ closed loop adaptive control to govern the trimming of the shift valves and they're instantaneously adjusted to take into account operating conditions," he explains. "Our aim is to get it right first time rather than have two or three goes at it."

"What's more, we use a powerful output retarder that gives constant retardation in relation to the vehicle's speed and you get a smooth transition from the retarder to the foundation brakes," he stresses. "You don't get any jolting."

Most urban buses in Europe and North America use automatic gearboxes. On the other side of the Atlantic, the Chicago Transit Authority is putting 1,050 40ft-long low-floor buses equipped with ZF's six-speed Ecomat transmission into service over the next five years. All the buses will be built by New Flyer, and it

will be supplying an additional 20 fitted with a hybrid-electric propulsion system.

The vehicles will be deployed on routes with an average of nine stops per kilometre and an average speed of 16.8mph. ZF contends that the six-speed Ecomat is especially well suited to this type of work, stating that in other major cities buses equipped with it have achieved fuel savings of from six to ten per cent when compared with similar vehicles fitted with five-speed transmissions.

Further south, three public transport companies in Santiago, the capital of Chile, are between them taking delivery of 1,667 Volvo buses equipped with six-speed Ecomats and ZF Servocom steering systems.

Closer to home, ZF has just introduced a compact version of its two-pedal AS Tronic box in MAN's new 7.5-tonne truck, and UK marketing manager, Geoff Buck, sees no reason why it shouldn't be made available in 28/30 seat buses and coaches. Using a conventional dry plate clutch, it doesn't have a torque converter.

Larger versions are already available that can handle power

outputs of from 500bhp to 600bhp along with a much higher torque output than Ecomat is capable of dealing with.

Britain is blessed with a large number of bus and coach transmission repair specialists, including JPAT, H L Smith, Blue Stripe, Hindle, and Queensbridge PSV.

Among the challenges many of them face are recruiting and retaining the technicians they need, obtaining the necessary technical data from manufacturers, and investing

in the sophisticated workshop equipment that's increasingly needed.

They also have to cope with increased integration of chassis components, with engine, transmission, retarder and service brakes all communicating with one another and working in harmony. This means that the gearbox no longer operates in isolation and that the troubles affecting it could be down to a fault elsewhere on the vehicle; a situation some repairers may find difficult to resolve. 

Contacts

ALLISON 01525 408600 www.allisontransmission.com

BLUE STRIPE 01384 893083

FORD 08457 111888 www.fordvans.co.uk

H L SMITH 01902 373011 www.hlsmith.com

IVECO/IRISBUS 01923 259660 www.irisbus.co.uk

JPAT 01934 852772 www.jpat.co.uk

MERCEDES 01908 245000 www.mercedes-benz.co.uk

QUEENSBIDGE 01924 281871

www.queensbridgetd.co.uk

RENAULT 01923 895000 www.renault.co.uk

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Service on demand for Kirkham Link

A NEW demand-responsive minibus service, the Kirkham Link, is now operating in the Fylde area of Lancashire. The service is operated by charity Rideability Blackpool, and is funded by the Countryside Agency and Lancashire county council.

The vehicle is a new Plaxton Pronto on a Mercedes-Benz Sprinter chassis with Sprintshift automated transmission. The Pronto was specified with 14 seats mounted on tracking with a quick-release mechanism. Wheelchair passengers board using a lift at the rear of the bus.

Lancashire county council's head of bus service procurement, Tony Moreton says: "Our aim with this kind of service is to fill gaps in public transport provision which meant in the past that people were either stranded or had to rely on cars to get out and about."



FOLLOWING the delivery of two Volvo B12B Sunbusdeguis in March, W&H Motors of Crawley has just taken a third. "Passenger comfort was a major factor in our initial purchasing decision. We've been more than happy with both the air-conditioning and overall standard of comfort on board," says managing director George Heron.



KMP of Llanberis is now running four Volvo B7RLEs with Wrightbus Eclipse Urban bodies, between Llanberis, Caernarfon and Llandudno. The KMP B7RLE features a Volvo D7C engine rated at 275bhp, coupled to a ZF 5HP552 gearbox. It can accommodate 44 passengers seated and up to 36 standing, plus one wheelchair.



AN OPTARE Solo SlimLine is covering a rural route between Prestatyn and St Asaph, serving two hospitals on the way. Operated by M&H Coaches, owner Margaret Owen says: "Many passengers are going to the hospitals and some have mobility problems. The Solo is ideal as it can take a wheelchair and has a low entry step."



ARRIVA Bus & Coach has delivered a second VDL SB120 with Wrightbus Cadet body to Leasks of Lerwick, on the Shetland Isles. Being based in one of the most northerly outposts of the British Isles, Leasks places a high premium on reliability and opted for the SB120. The new bus has 39 seats and a maximum capacity of 60.

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CHASSIS AND INTEGRALS

Make and model	Engine Position	Overall Length (m)	Wheelbase (m)	Engine	Cubic Capacity (litres)	Max Power (bhp)	Gearbox	Speeds	Fuel tank (litres)	Wheel/tyre size	Brakes front/rear	Max GVW	Power/Weight ratio
AYATS (GB) Ayats Ltd, 3 Tweed Road, Clevedon, North Somerset BS21 6RR Tel 01275 349411 Fax 01275 349311 www.ayats.co.uk													
Platinum	RV	10.2	6.0	MAN D0836	6.9	280	ZF S6-36	6 M	-	285/70R 19.5	Drum/Drum	-	-
Bravo	RV	12.0	6.0	MAN D2866	12.0	360	ZF 6HP600	5 A	-	315/80R 22.5	Disc/Drum	24t	15.0
Bravo	RV	12.0	6.0	MAN D2866	12.0	460	ZF 8S-180	8 M	-	315/80R 22.5	Disc/Drum	24t	19.2
Bravo Plus	RV	13.75	-	MAN D2866	12.0	460	ZF 8S-180	8 M	-	315/80R 22.5	Disc/Drum	26t	17.7
Atlantis	RV	12.0	6.15	MAN D2866	12.0	360	ZF 6HP600	5 A	-	-	-	18t	-

BMC (UK) BMC (UK) BMC House, Ibstock Road, Coventry CV6 6JR Tel 02476 363003 www.bmcukltd.com													
Probus coach	RV	8.5	4.2	Cummins ISBe	5.9	220	ZF 6S-90	6 M	190	245/70R 19.5	Disc/Disc	12t	18.3
Gearbox option - ZF automatic													
Schoolbus 1100FE	FV	10.7	5.85	Cummins ISBe	3.9	150	Allison 2000	4 A	190	265/70R 19.5	Drum/Drum	12t	12.5

BOVA Autobusfabriek BOVA BV, Postbus 5, 5550 AA Valkenswaard, Netherlands Tel 00 31 40 208 46 11 Fax 00 31 40 204 20 45 www.bova.nl													
Futura FHD10.340XE	RV	10	4.89	DAF XE	12.6	340	ZF 6S-1600 HGS	6 M	490	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Drum	18t	18.9
Futura FHD12.340XE	RV	12	6.09	DAF XE	12.6	340	ZF 6S-1600 HGS	6 M	745	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Drum	18t	18.9
Futura FHD12.380XE	RV	12	6.09	DAF XE	12.6	380	ZF 6S-1600 HGS	6 M	745	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Drum	18t	21.1
Futura FHD13.340XE	RV	12.7	6.8	DAF XE	12.6	340	ZF 6S-1600 HGS	6 M	745	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Drum	18t	18.9
Futura FHD13.380XE	RV	12.7	6.8	DAF XE	12.6	380	ZF 6S-1600 HGS	6 M	745	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Drum	18t	21.1
Futura FHD14.430XE	RV	13.58	6.09	DAF XE	12.6	430	ZF 8S-180 HGS	8 M	745	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Drum	24.45t	17.6
Futura FHD15.430XE	RV	15	6.8	DAF XE	12.6	430	ZF 8S-180 HGS	8 M	745	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Drum	24.45t	17.6
Magiq HD122.340.XE	RV	12.2	6.15	DAF XE	12.6	340	ZF 6S-1600 HGS	6 M	774	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	18.9
Magiq HD122.380.XE	RV	12.2	6.15	DAF XE	12.6	380	ZF 6S-1600 HGS	6 M	774	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	21.1
Coach distributors: Moseley (PCV), Moseley in the South, Moseley Distributors.													

DENNIS Dennis Chassis, Dennis Way, Guildford GU1 1AF Tel 01483 571271 Fax 01483 301697 www.alexander-dennis.com													
Mini Dart	RV	8.8	3.9	Cummins ISBe	3.9	135	Allison 2000	4 A	220	245/70R 19.5	Drum/Drum	11t	12.3
Dart SLF	RV	9.3	4.40	Cummins ISBe	3.9	135	Allison 2000	4 A	220	245/70R 19.5	Drum/Drum	11t	12.3
Dart SLF	RV	10.1	5.20	Cummins ISBe	3.9	135	Allison 2000	4 A	220	245/70R 19.5	Drum/Drum	11t	12.3
Dart SLF	RV	10.7	5.81	Cummins ISBe	3.9	150	Allison 2000	4 A	220	245/70R 19.5	Drum/Drum	11.5t	13.0
Super Dart	RV	11.4	5.95	Cummins ISBe	5.9	185	Allison T280	4 A	220	245/70R 19.5	Drum/Drum	13t	12.7
Super Dart gearbox options - Voith D851.3													
Enviro300	RV	12.0	6.17	Cummins ISBe	5.9	220	ZF 5HP502	5 A	250	265/70R 19.5	Disc/Disc	14.4t	15.3
Enviro300	RV	12.5	6.69	Cummins ISBe	5.9	220	ZF 5HP502	5 A	250	265/70R 19.5	Disc/Disc	14.4t	15.3
Enviro300 gearbox options - Allison T280, Voith D854.3, ZF 6HP502													
Trident	RV	9.9	5.25	Cummins ISCe	8.3	225	Voith D854.3	4 A	275	275/70R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	12.5
Trident	RV	10.5	5.80	Cummins ISCe	8.3	225	Voith D854.3	4 A	275	275/70R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	12.5
Trident	RV	10.6	5.95	Cummins ISCe	8.3	225	Voith D854.3	4 A	275	275/70R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	12.5
Trident	RV	11.4	6.63	Cummins ISCe	8.3	225	Voith D854.3	4 A	275	275/70R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	12.5
Trident engine option - 260bhp rating. Gearbox options - ZF 4HP 502, 5HP 502													
Javelin	UV	10.0	5.00	Cummins ISCe	8.3	211	ZF S6-85	6 M	-	275/80R 22.5	Disc/Drum	-	-
Javelin	UV	12.0	6.25	Cummins ISCe	8.3	245	ZF S6-85	6 M	434	275/80R 22.5	Disc/Drum	18t	13.6
R300	RV	12.0	6.20	Cummins ISCe	8.3	300	ZF6S-1600	6 M	450	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	16.7
R345	RV	12.0	6.20	Cummins ISMe	11.0	345	ZF6S-1600	6 M	450	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	19.2
R420	RV	12.0	6.20	Cummins ISMe	11.0	420	ZF ASTronic	10 M	450	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	23.3
Coach distributors: Salvador Caetano (UK), Plaxton Coach Sales													

IRISBUS (UK) Iveco House, Station Road, Watford WD17 1SR Tel 01923 259660 Fax 01923 259623 www.irisbus.co.uk													
Agora Line	RV	12.0	6.12	Iveco Cursor 8	7.8	245	ZF 4HP502	4 A	250	275/70R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	13.6
DailyBus 50C 13	FV	6.4	3.75	Iveco 8140.43S	2.8	125	ZF S6-300	6 M	90	195/75R 16	Disc/Disc	5.4t	23.1
DailyBus 50C 13	FV	7.2	4.35	Iveco 8140.43S	2.8	125	ZF S6-300	6 M	90	195/75R 16	Disc/Disc	5.4t	23.1
DailyBus 65C 15	FV	7.2	4.35	Iveco 8140.43N	2.8	146	ZF S6-300	6 M	90	225/75R 16	Disc/Disc	6.5t	22.5
DailyBus 65C 15	FV	8.1	4.75	Iveco 8140.43N	2.8	146	ZF S6-300	6 M	90	225/75R 16	Disc/Disc	6.5t	22.5
Daily Logo	FV	8.5	5.04	Iveco 8140.43N	2.8	146	ZF S6-300	6 M	-	225/75R 16	Disc/Disc	7t	20.9
Scolabus 24	FV	12.0	6.57	Iveco Tector F4A	5.9	240	Allison MD3060	6 A	280	295/70R 19.5	Disc/Drum	15t	16.0
EuroMidi	FV	8.4	4.63	Iveco Tector F4A	5.9	210	Iveco 2855.6	6 M	200	225/75R 17.5	Disc/Disc	10t	21.0
MidiRider coach	RV	9.8	4.32	Iveco Tector F4A	5.9	264	ZF S6-85	6 M	200	265/70R 19.5	Disc/Drum	-	-
EuroRider	RV	12.0	6.15	Iveco Cursor 8	7.8	352	ZF 6S-1600	6M	467	295/70R 22.5	Disc/Drum	18t	19.5
Gearbox option - EuroRider ZF 5HP592 automatic													
Coach distributors: Plaxton Coach Sales, UK Coach & Bus													

KING LONG Ibstock Road, Coventry CV6 6JR Tel 02476 363004													
6127	RV	12.0	6.0	Cummins ISMe	11.0	335	ZF Ecomat 2	6 A	-	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	-	-

MAN Neoman Bus UK, Frankland Road, Blagrove, Swindon SN5 8YU Tel 01793 448356 Fax 01793 485260 www.neoman.co.uk													
Bus													
12.220 NL	RV	10.7	5.2	MAN D0826	6.9	220	Voith D851.3	4 A	150	265/70R 19.5	Disc/Drum	12t	18.3
14.220 NL	RV	11.3	5.8	MAN D0826	6.9	220	Voith D851.3	4 A	150	265/70R 19.5	Disc/Drum	14t	15.7
Gearbox option - ZF 4HP502													
18.220 NL	RV	12.0	5.88	MAN D0826	6.9	220	Voith D851.3	3 A	300	275/70R 22.5	Drum/Drum	18t	12.2
Coach													
12.220	RV	10.0	4.7	MAN D0826	6.9	220	ZF S6-36	6 M	150	255/70R 22.5	Drum/Drum	12.8t	17.2
14.280	RV	11.5	-	MAN D0836	6.9	280	ZF S6-1600	6 M	-	285/70R 19.5	Disc/Drum	14t	20.0
18.310	RV	12.0	-	MAN D2866	12.0	310	ZF S6-85	6 M	235	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18.2t	17.2
18.360	RV	12.0	-	MAN D2866	12.0	360	ZF S6-85	6 M	235	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18.2t	20.0
24.410	RV	12.0	5.35	MAN D2866	12.0	410	ZF 8S-180	8 M	-	315/80R 22.5	Drum/Drum	24t	17.1
Coach distributors: BASE, Mentor Coach & Bus, Salvador Caetano (UK)													

MERCEDES-BENZ EvoBus (UK) Ltd, Ashcroft Way, Crosspoint Business Park, Coventry CV2 2SR Tel 02476 626000 Fax 02476 626006 www.evobus.co.uk													
Vario 0814D	FV	6.94	4.25	Mercedes OM904LA	4.25	136	ZF 5S-42	5 M	125	205/75R 17.5	Disc/Disc	7.5t	18.1
Vario 0814D	FV	7.49	4.80	Mercedes OM904LA	4.25	136	ZF 5S-42	5 M	125	205/75R 17.5	Disc/Disc	7.5t	18.1
Engine option - 152 bhp rating in 0815D. Gearbox option - Allison AT542 automatic													
OC500 Touro	RH	12.0	6.25	Mercedes OM457HLA	12.0	354	Mercedes G190	6 M	400	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	19.7
Gearbox option - ZF 5HP602 automatic													
Citaro 0.530	RH	12.0	5.85	Mercedes OM906HLA	6.4	231	ZF 5HP502	5 A	300	275/70R 22.5	Disc/Disc	-	-
Citaro 0.530G	RV	18.0	-	Mercedes OM906HLA	6.4	279	ZF 5HP502	5 A	300	275/70R 22.5	Disc/Disc	28t	9.9
Gearbox option - Voith four-speed automatic													
Atego 12.23L	FV	9.95	4.84	Mercedes OM906LA	6.4	230	Mercedes G85	6 M	210	265/70R 19.5	Disc/Disc	12t	19.2

CHASSIS AND INTEGRALS

Make and model	Engine Position	Overall Length (m)	Wheelbase (m)	Engine	Cubic Capacity (litres)	Max Power (bhp)	Gearbox	Speeds	Fuel tank (litres)	Wheel/tire size	Brakes front/rear	Max GVW	Power/Weight ratio
NEOPLAN integral Mentor Coach & Bus, Euroway Estate, Hellaby, Rotherham S66 8QL Tel 01709 700600 Fax 01709 700007 www.mentorplc.com													
Euroliner N313SHD	RV	10.6	5.2	Mercedes OM441LA	11.9	290	ZF6S-1600	6 M	425	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	16.1
Euroliner N316SHD	RV	12.0	5.8	Mercedes OM441LA	11.9	340	ZF 6S-1600	6 M	425	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	18.9
Euroliner N316SHDL	RV	13.7	6.35	MAN D2860	11.9	410	ZF ASTronic	12 M	425	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	26t	15.8
Starliner N516SHD	RV	12.0	5.55	Mercedes OM402LA	12.8	381	ZF 8S-180C	8 M	425	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	25.5t	14.9
Starliner N516SHDL	RV	13.9	6.35	MAN D2860	11.9	410	ZF 8S-180C	8 M	460	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	26t	15.8
Engine option - 460bhp rating. Gearbox option - ZF ASTronic													
Skyliner N122/3 dd	RV	12.0	5.55	Mercedes OM402LA	12.8	381	ZF 8S - 180C	8 M	620	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	25.5t	14.9
Skyliner N122/3 dd	RV	12.0	5.55	MAN D2866	11.9	400	ZF 8S - 180C	8 M	620	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	25.5t	15.7
Skyliner N122/3L dd	RV	13.7	5.55	MAN D2876	11.9	460	ZF ASTronic	12 M	620	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	26t	17.7
OPTARE integral Optare Ltd, Manston Lane, Leeds LS15 8SU Tel 0113 264 5182 Fax 0113 260 6635 www.optare.com													
Alero AL01-4	FV	7.2	4.8	Iveco 8140.43	2.8	125	ZF6S-300	6M	70/120	205/75R 17.5	Disc/Disc	6t	
Gearbox Option - ZF4HP22, four speed automatic													
Solo M780	RV	7.8	4.83	Mercedes OM904LA	4.25	122	Allison 2000	5 A	200	215/75R 17.5	Disc/Disc	10.5t	11.6
Solo M850	RV	8.5	5.53	Mercedes OM904LA	4.25	122	Allison 2000	5 A	200	215/75R 17.5	Disc/Disc	10.5t	11.6
Solo M920	RV	9.2	6.23	Mercedes OM904LA	4.25	122	Allison 2000	5 A	200	215/75R 17.5	Disc/Disc	10.5t	11.6
Solo M990	RV	9.9	6.93	Mercedes OM904LA	4.25	122	Allison 2000	5 A	200	215/75R 17.5	Disc/Disc	10.5t	11.6
Engine option - Mercedes 147bhp; Cummins ISBe 185bhp													
Tempo X1060	RV	10.57	4.95	Mercedes OM904LA	6.4	241	ZF6HP500	6 A	200	275/70R 22.5	Drum/Drum	17.0t	14.2
Tempo X1130	RV	11.28	5.66	Mercedes OM904LA	6.4	241	ZF6HP500	6 A	200	275/70R 22.5	Drum/Drum	17.0t	14.2
Tempo X1200	RV	11.99	6.37	Mercedes OM904LA	6.4	241	ZF6HP500	6 A	200	275/70R 22.5	Drum/Drum	17.0t	14.2
Tempo X1260	RV	12.60	6.99	Mercedes OM904LA	6.4	241	ZF6HP500	6 A	200	275/70R 22.5	Drum/Drum	17.0t	14.2
Engine option - Mercedes 275bhp. Gearbox option: Allison T310R five speed automatic													
SCANIA Scania Bus and Coach UK Ltd, Claylands Avenue, Workop S81 7DJ Tel 01909 500822 Fax 01909 500165 www.scania.com													
K94IB 4x2	RV	12.0	5.83	Scania DC 902	9.0	260	Scania GR801R CS	7 M	465	315/80R 22.5	Disc	19.5t	13.3
(S-kool Coach only)	RV	12.0	5.83	Scania DC 903	9.0	300	ZF 5HP592C N	5 A	465	315/80R 22.5	Disc	19.5t	15.4
K114EB/IB 4x2	RV	12.0	5.83	Scania DC 1104	10.6	340	Scania GR801R CS/OC	7/8 M	465	315/80R 22.5	Disc	19.5t	17.4
K114EB 4x2	RV	12.2	6.13	Scania DC 1104	10.6	380	Scania GR801R CS/OC	7/8 M	465	315/80R 22.5	Disc	19.5t	19.5
K114EB/IB 6x2	RV	12.0	6.85	Scania DC 1104	10.6	340	Scania GR801R CS/OC	7/8 M	546	315/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	25.0t	15.2
Gearbox option - ZF5HP602 automatic on K114													
K114EB 6x2*4	RV	13.5	8.15	Scania DC 1104	10.6	380	ZF 5HP602C HT	5 A	610	315/80R 22.5	Disc	26.5t	14.3
K124EB/IB 4x2	RV	12.0	5.83	Scania DC 1202	12.0	420	Scania GR801R CS/OC	7/8 M	465	315/80R 22.5	Disc	19.5t	21.5
K124EB 6x2	RV	12.0	7.02	Scania DC 1202	12.0	420	Scania GR801R CS/OC	7/8 M	465	315/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc/Drum	25.0t	21.5
K124EB 6x2*4	RV	12.8	7.24	Scania DC 1202	12.0	420	Scania GR801R CS/OC	8 M	465	315/80R 22.5	Disc	26.5t	14.3
K124EB 6x2*4	RV	13.5	8.15	Scania DC 1202	12.0	420	Scania GR801R CS/OC	8 M	610	315/80R 22.5	Disc	26.5t	14.3
L94UB 4x2	RV	12.0	6.0	Scania DC 901	9.0	230	ZF 5HP502C NBS	5 A	290	275/70R 22.5	Disc	19.1t	12.1
L94UA 6x2/2	RV	18.0	-	Scania DC 902	9.0	260	ZF 5HP592C NBS	5 A	345	275/70R 22.5	Disc	28.6t	9.1
N94UB 4x2	RV	10.6	5.3	Scania DC 901	9.0	230	ZF 5HP502C NBS	5 A	365	275/70R 22.5	Disc	19.1t	12.1
N94UD 4x2	RV	10.6	5.3	Scania DC 902	9.0	260	ZF 5HP592C NBS	5 A	260	275/70R 22.5	Disc	19.1t	13.6
N94UD 4x2	RV	12.0	6.0	Scania DC 902	9.0	260	ZF 5HP592C NBS	5 A	260	275/70R 22.5	Disc	19.1t	13.6
CN94UB 4x2 Omni City	RV	12.0	6.0	Scania DC 901	9.0	230	ZF 5HP502C NBS	5 A	300	275/70R 22.5	Disc	19.1t	12.1
CN94UB 6x2/2 Omni City	RV	18.0	-	Scania DC 902	9.0	260	ZF 5HP592C NBS	5 A	300	275/70R 22.5	Disc	28.6t	9.1
SETRA integral EvoBus (UK) Ltd, Ashcroft Way, Crosspoint Business Park, Coventry CV2 2SR Tel 02476 626000 Fax 02476 626006 www.evobus.co.uk													
S315 GT HD	RV	12.0	6.08	Mercedes OM457LA	12.0	422	Mercedes GO190	6M	535	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	-	-
S315 GT HD	RV	12.0	6.08	Mercedes OM457LA	12.0	422	ZF ASTronic	12M	535	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	-	-
S415 HD	RV	12.0	6.08	Mercedes OM457LA	12.0	422	Mercedes GO190	6M	570	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	-	-
S415 HD	RV	12.0	6.08	Mercedes OM457LA	12.0	422	ZF ASTronic	12M	570	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	-	-
TOYOTA Toyota GB plc, Great Burgh, Burgh Heath, Epsom, Surrey KT18 5UX Tel 01737 363633 Fax 01737 367730													
Optimo V	FV	7.6	3.94	Toyota 15 B FTE	4.1	135	Toyota	6 M	-	205/75R 17.5	Disc/Drum	6.7t	21.4
Coach distributors: A&D Coach Sales, Salvador Caetano UK, Holloway Commercial													
VAN HOOL Van Hool NV, Bernard Van Hoolstraat 58, B-2500 Lier, Belgium Tel 00 32 3 420 20 20 Fax 00 32 3 482 33 60 www.vanhool.be													
T917 Astron	RV	13.85	6.7	MAN D2866	12.0	460	ZF ASTronic	12 M	735	315/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	-	
VOL BUS Arriva Bus & Coach, Lodge Garage, Whitehall Road West, Gomersal, Cleckheaton BD19 4BJ Tel 01274 681144 Fax 01274 651198													
DB250 RS	RV	9.9	5.05	DAF PE183C	9.2	218	Voith D851.3	3 A	300	275/70R 22.5	Drum/Drum	17.4t	12.5
DB250 RS	RV	10.3	5.45	DAF PE183C	9.2	218	Voith D851.3	3 A	300	275/70R 22.5	Drum/Drum	17.4t	12.5
Engine option - 249bhp rating. Gearbox options - ZF 4HP500, 5HP500, Voith D854.3													
SB120	RV	9.4	4.3	Cummins ISBe	3.9	135	Allison AT545	4 A	250	245/70R 19.5	Disc/Disc	11.5t	11.7
SB120	RV	10.2	5.2	Cummins ISBe	3.9	135	Allison AT545	4 A	250	245/70R 19.5	Disc/Disc	11.5t	11.7
SB120	RV	10.8	5.8	Cummins ISBe	3.9	150	Allison AT545	4 A	250	245/70R 19.5	Disc/Disc	11.5t	13.0
SB200	RV	11.8	6.0	Cummins ISBe	5.9	185	Voith D851.3	4 A	250	265/70R 19.5	Disc/Disc	14.4t	12.8
SB4000PF	RV	12.0	-	DAF PE228C	9.2	310	ZF 5HP592	5 A	430	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	17.2
SB4000XF	RV	12.0	-	DAF XE250C	12.6	340	ZF 5HP602	5 A	430	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	18.9
SB4000+ 3 axle	RV	12.0+	-	DAF XE250C	12.6	350	ZF 5HP602	5 A	-	195/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	24t	14.6
VOLVO Volvo Bus Ltd, Wedgcock Lane, Warwick CV34 5YA Tel 01926 401777 Fax 01926 407407 www.volvobuses.volvo.co.uk													
B7R	RV	12.0	6.30	Volvo D7C	7.3	275	ZF 6HP550	6 A	300	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	15.3
Engine option - 290bhp rating. Gearbox option - Volvo EGS													
B7TL dd	RV	9.8	5.2	Volvo D7C	7.3	215	ZF 5HP502	5 A	270	275/70R 22.5	Disc/Drum	18t	11.9
B7TL dd	RV	10.3	5.7	Volvo D7C	7.3	215	ZF 5HP502	5 A	270	275/70R 22.5	Disc/Drum	18t	11.9
Engine option - 250bhp rating. Gearbox option - Voith D863.3													
B9TL 3-axle dd	RV	12.0+	-	Volvo D9C	9	340	ZF 6HP592	6 A	-	275/70R 22.5	Disc/Drum	23t	14.8
B7L sd	RV	12.0	6.0	Volvo D7C	7.3	215	ZF 5HP502	5 A	-	275/70R 22.5	Disc/Drum	18t	11.9
Engine option - 250bhp rating.													
B7LA	RV	18.0	-	Volvo D7C	7.3	275	ZF 5HP592	5 A	-	275/70R 22.5	Disc/Drum	28t	9.8
B7RLE	RV	12.0	-	Volvo D7C	7.3	275	ZF 5HP502	5 A	270	275/70R 22.5	Disc/Drum	18.9t	11.9
Merit	RV	10.8	5.8	Cummins ISBe	3.9	150	Allison AT545	4 A	250	245/70R 19.5	Disc/Disc	11.5t	13.0
B12M	UH	12.0	6.20	Volvo DH12D	12.1	340	ZF6S-1600	6 M	450	315/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	18.9
B12B	RH	12.0	-	Volvo DH12D	12.1	340	Volvo EGS-VVR	8 M	600	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	18t	18.9
B12B 3 axle	RH	13.7	-	Volvo DH12D	12.1	340	Volvo EGS-VVR	8 M	600	295/80R 22.5	Disc/Disc	24t	14.2
Engine options - 380 and 420bhp ratings. Gearbox options - ZF 5HP602 (B12M and B12B 340); Volvo I-Shift (B12M, B12B)													
Coach distributors: Salvador Caetano (UK), Moseley (PCV), Moseley in the South, Moseley Distributors, Plaxton Coach Sales, Volvo Coach Sales													

BODIES

Manufacturer
and model

Structure

Nominal
Length

Body Type

Chassis
availability

ALEXANDER

Alexander Dennis, 91 Glasgow Road, Falkirk FK1 4JB
Tel 01324 621672 Fax 01324 632469 www.alexander-dennis.com

Pointer 2	Aluminium	8.8-11.4m	LF Midi	Dennis Dart SLF
ALX300	Aluminium	12m	LF SD	MAN 18.220
ALX400	Aluminium	10.5m	LF DD	VDL DB250LF, Dennis Trident, Volvo B7TL

BERKHOF

VDL Berkhof Valkenswaard, PO Box 585, 5550 AN Valkenswaard, De Vest 55, 5555 XP Valkenswaard, The Netherlands Tel 00 31 40 208 2424 Fax 00 31 40 208 2425 www.vdlberkhof.com

Axial 50	Steel	12m	3.55m coach	Volvo B12M, B12B
Axial 70	Steel	12m	3.7m coach	Volvo B12M, B12B
Axial 100	Steel	12-13.5m	4m DD coach	Scania K114, K124, Volvo B12B

Coach Distributors: Volvo Coach Sales, Scania Bus and Coach UK

BEULAS

UK Coach & Bus, Sandbeck Way, Hellaby, Rotherham S66 8QL
Tel 01709 705570 Fax 01709 705569 www.uk-cb.com

Midi-Star	Steel	9.8m	3.4m coach	Iveco MidiRider
Stergo E	Steel	12m	3.56m coach	Iveco EuroRider
El Mundo	Steel	12m	3.8m coach	Iveco EuroRider

CAETANO

Salvador Caetano (UK) Ltd, Mill Lane, Heather, Leicestershire LE67 2QE
Tel 01530 263333 Fax 01530 263379 www.caetano.co.uk

Optimo V	Steel	7.5m	Midicoach	Toyota
Enigma	Steel	9.8m	3.2m coach	MAN 14.280
Enigma	Steel	12m	3.5m coach	Dennis R410, Volvo B12B, MAN 18.310

EAST LANCs

East Lancashire Coachbuilders Ltd, Lower Phillips Road, Whitebirk Industrial Estate, Blackburn BB1 5UD, Tel 01254 504150 Fax 01254 504181 www.elcb.co.uk

Myllennium	Alusuisse	8.8-12m	LF SD	Dennis Dart, MAN 14.220, Scania N94
Lolyne	Alusuisse	10.0-10.5m	LF DD	Dennis Trident
Vyking	Alusuisse	10.0-12m	LF DD	Volvo B7TL, B9TL
Myllennium LowLander	Alusuisse	10.3-12m	LF DD	VDL Bus DB250
OmniDekka	Alusuisse	10.6-12m	LF DD	Scania N94

EURO COACHBUILDERS

Derrybeg Industrial Estate, Gweedore, Co Donegal, Ireland
Tel 00 353 75 31528 Fax 00 353 75 31930 www.eurocoachbuilders.ie

LX	Steel	8.3m	Midicoach	Mercedes Vario
V29/Pantera	Steel	8.3m	Midicoach	Mercedes Vario
Clady	Steel	10.3m	Coach	Mercedes Atego 1223L
School Bus	Steel	10.3m	SD	Mercedes Atego 1223L
E Lancs Myllennium	Aluminium	8.8m	LF SD	TransBus Dart

Coach Distributor: Taylors PCV Sales

INDCAR

UK Coach & Bus, Sandbeck Way, Hellaby, Rotherham S66 8QL
Tel 01709 705570 Fax 01709 705569 www.uk-cb.com

Maxim 2	Steel	8.4m	Midicoach	Iveco EuroMidi
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IRIZAR

Scania Bus and Coach UK Ltd, Claylands Avenue, Worksop S81 7DJ
Tel 01909 500822 Fax 01909 500165

Intercentury	Steel	12m	3.2m coach	Scania K114
Century Style	Steel	12m	3.5m coach	Scania K114
Century Club	Steel	12m	3.5m coach	Scania K124
Century Topline	Steel	12m	3.5m coach	Scania K124
PB	Steel	12.2m	3.5m coach	Scania K124
S-Kool	Steel	12m	3.2m school coach	Scania K94

JONCKHEERE

Volvo Coach Sales, Brisco Avenue, Loughborough LE11 5HP
Tel 01509 217777 Fax 01509 260978 www.jonckheere.be

Mistral 30	Steel	12m	3.2m coach	Volvo B7R
Mistral 50	Steel	12m	3.5m coach	Volvo B12M, B12B
Mistral 70	Steel	13.7m	3.7m coach	Volvo B12B

BODY TYPES: DD DOUBLE-DECK; SD CONVENTIONAL SINGLE-DECK, LF LOW-FLOOR

BODIES

Manufacturer
and model

Structure

Nominal
Length

Body Type

Chassis
availability

MARCOPOLLO

BASE, Sandy Way, Holmeswood, Ormskirk, Lancashire L40 1UB
Tel 01254 685599 www.basecoachsales.co.uk

Viaggio 330	Steel	9.9m	3.3m coach	MAN 12.220
Viaggio 330	Steel	12m	3.5m coach	MAN 18.310, VDL Bus SB4000
Viaggio 350	Steel	12m	3.5m coach	MAN 18.310, 18.360, VDL Bus SB4000
Viaggio 370	Steel	12m	3.7m coach	MAN 24.410

MCV

MCV Bus and Coach, Stirling Place, Elean Business Park, Sutton, Ely CB6 2QE
Tel 01353 773000 Fax 01353 773001

Evolution	S'less steel	9.8-10.2m	LF SD	MAN 12.220
Evolution	S'less steel	11.2m	LF SD	MAN 14.220

NOGE

Mentor Coach & Bus, Euroway Estate, Hellaby, Rotherham S66 8QL
Tel 01709 700600 Fax 01709 700007 www.mentorplc.com

Catalan 320	Steel	10m	3.2m midi-coach	MAN 13.220
Catalan 350	Steel	12m	3.5m coach	MAN 18.310, 18.350
Catalan 370	Steel	12m	3.7m coach	MAN 24.410

OPTARE

Optare Ltd, Manston Lane, Leeds LS15 8SU
Tel 0113 264 5182 Fax 0113 260 6635 www.optare.com

Bonito	Steel	6.7m	Minicoach	Ford Transit FT 350EL
Soroco	Steel	6.5m	Minicoach	Mercedes Benz Sprinter
Soroco Plus	Steel	7.7m	MidiCoach	Mercedes Benz Sprinter
Nouvelle	Steel	8.4m	MidiCoach	Mercedes Benz Vario
Solera Corta	Steel	8.3m	Coach	Mercedes Benz Atego 12.23L
Solera SR	Steel	9.95m	Coach	Mercedes Benz Atego 12.23L

Coach distributors: AWCS, Bob Vale, Holloway Commercials, Yorks.

PLAXTON

Plaxton, Eastfield, Scarborough YO11 3BY
Tel: 01723 581500 Fax: 01723 581328 www.plaxtonlimited.co.uk

Pronto	S'less Steel	6.6m	Minibus	Mercedes Benz Sprinter
Beaver 2	Steel	7.8-8.5m	Midi	Mercedes Vario
Cheetah	Steel	8.5m	Midicoach	Mercedes Vario
Profile	Steel	10-12m	3.2m coach	Dennis Javelin, Volvo B7R
Paragon	S'less Steel	12-12.8m	3.5m coach	Volvo B12M, B12B, Dennis R, Iveco Eurorider
Panther	S'less Steel	12m	3.5m coach	Volvo B12M, B12B, Dennis R, Iveco Eurorider

Coach distributors: Plaxton Coach Sales, Volvo Coach Sales

SC COACHBUILDERS

SC Coachbuilders, Hambledon Road, Waterlooville, Hampshire PO7 7UA
Tel: 01705 258211 Fax 01705 255611 www.caetano.co.uk

Nimbus	Aluminium	8.8-11.4m	LF Midi	Dennis Dart
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SITCAR

Moseley (PCV) Ltd, Elmsall Way, Dale Lane, South Elmsall, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF9 2XS
Tel 01977 609000 Fax 01977 609900 www.moseleycoachsales.co.uk

Beluga	Steel	8.3-8.5m	Midicoach	Mercedes Vario
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SUNSUNDEGUI

Volvo Coach Sales, Brisco Avenue, Loughborough LE11 5HP
Tel 01509 217777 Fax 01509 260978 www.volvobuses.volvo.co.uk

Sideral	Steel	12m	3.2m coach	Volvo B7R
Sideral	Steel	12m	3.5m coach	Volvo B12M, B12B

VAN HOOL

Van Hool NV, Bernard Van Hoolstraat 58, B-2500 Lier, Belgium
Tel 00 32 3 420 20 20 Fax 00 32 3 482 33 60 www.vanhool.be

Alizee	Steel	12m	3.47m coach	VDL Bus SB4000, Scania K114/K124, Volvo B12M, B12B
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Coach distributors: Arriva Bus & Coach, Moseley, Scania Bus & Coach

WRIGHTBUS

Wrightbus Ltd, Galgorm Industrial Estate, Fenaghy Road, Ballymena BT42 1PY
Tel 02825 641212 Fax 02825 649703 www.wright-bus.com

Cadet	Aluminique	9.4-10.8	LF Midi	VDL Bus SB120
Commander	Toggled Aluminium	11.8m	LF SD	VDL Bus SB200
Solar		12m	LF SD	Scania L94UB
Solar Fusion		18m	LF artic	Scania L94UA
Eclipse Metro		12m	LF SD	Volvo B7L
Eclipse Urban		12m	LF SD	Volvo B7RLE
Eclipse Commuter		12m	SD	Volvo B7RLE
Eclipse Fusion		18m	LF artic	Volvo B7LA
Eclipse Gemini		10.1-10.6m	LF DD	Volvo B7TL
Pulsar Gemini		10.3m	LF DD	VDL Bus DB250

www.busandcoach.com



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04 (04) Ford Transit 17 seat minibus, 90PS, 15,000miles, COIF/PSV	£17,100
03 (53) Ford Transit 17 seat minibus, 90PS, 18000miles, COIF/PSV	£16,250
03 (03) Ford Transit 17 seat minibus, 90PS, 23000miles, COIF/PSV	£15,150
02 (52) Ford Transit 17 seat minibus, 90PS, 30000miles, COIF/PSV	£14,500
02 (02) Ford Transit 16 seat M/H/R LWB. Twin s/l Doors choice	£9,500

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04 (04) LDV Convoy 17 seat minibus, 90PS, 13000miles, COIF/PSV	£11,995
03 (53) LDV Convoy 17 seat minibus, 90PS, 17771miles, COIF/PSV	£11,495
03 (03) LDV Convoy 17 seat minibus, 90PS, 24000miles, Tow Bar	
Tachograph, easiclean vinyl floor, In Red	£10,950
P (96) Iveco 25 seat coach COIF/PSV, wheelchair acc, 2.5LTR TD engine	£7,950

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turbo diesel, luxury conversion, 16 seats, extended rear coach end, front entry slam door, high roof, bonded windows, DVD, M2 high back seats, Eberspacher heater & air con. High spec, too many extras to list.

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2.8 turbo diesel, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, lowering suspension and ramp, full height power door with low front entry, ex charity, 45,000 miles only

1994 L REG MERCEDES 7000 AUTO TRANSMISSION



Diesel, coach built body, 14 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, PLS underfloor lift, power door front entry, one owner, ex local authority, low miles

NEW UNREGISTERED IVECO 50.C13



2.9 turbo diesel, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, PLS underfloor lift, power door front entry, one owner, ex local authority, low miles

W REG VOLKSWAGEN TRANSPORTER 2.5TDI



Manual, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, air con, portapump, one owner, ex local authority, 38,000 miles

R REG MERCEDES SPRINTER 310



Diesel, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, Ratcliff tail lift, side loading door, ex local authority

1996 P REG MERCEDES 609D WADHAM COACHBUILT BODY



LWB, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, Ratcliff tail lift, Eberspacher heater, ex local authority, good condition

1999/2003 REG RENAULT MASTER T35



2.2 & 2.5 L, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, PLS underfloor lift, power door front entry, one owner, ex local authority, low miles

R REG MERCEDES SPRINTER 410



Diesel, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, Ratcliff tail lift, side loading door, ex local authority

PP REG 2001 VOLKSWAGEN TRANSPORTER



1.9 TDI, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, Ratcliff tail lift, side loading door, ex local authority, 49,000 miles

NEW UNREGISTERED IVECO 45.C13 2.9 TURBO DIESEL



Excellent condition, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, bonded windows, M2 high back seats, Unwin tracking, heater, new underfloor PLS tail lift, new conversion, choice of 2

S REG MERCEDES VARIO 614D



Diesel, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, PLS underfloor lift, front entry, plug door, low front entry, ex local authority

Y REG 2001 VOLKSWAGEN TRANSPORTER



2.5 TDI, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, bonded windows, M2 high back seats, Unwin tracking, heater, new underfloor PLS tail lift, new conversion, choice of 2

51 REG PEUGEOT EXPERT 1.9TD



5 speed manual, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, bonded windows, M2 high back seats, Unwin tracking, heater, new underfloor PLS tail lift, new conversion, choice of 2

T REG CITROEN RELAY



2.5 diesel, 5 speed, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, bonded windows, M2 high back seats, Unwin tracking, heater, new underfloor PLS tail lift, new conversion, choice of 2

1995 M REG FORD TRANSIT 230 DEVON COACHBUILT BODY



2.5 diesel, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, PLS underfloor lift, power door front entry, good condition, well maintained

R REG FORD TRANSIT 2.5 DIESEL TURBO



2.5 diesel, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, bonded windows, M2 high back seats, Unwin tracking, heater, new underfloor PLS tail lift, new conversion, choice of 2

P REG IVECO 50.12 AUTO TRANSMISSION



2.8 diesel, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, bonded windows, M2 high back seats, Unwin tracking, heater, new underfloor PLS tail lift, new conversion, choice of 2

03 REG FIAT ULYSSE ELEGANZA PEOPLE CARRIER 2.0 16V



Automatic, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, bonded windows, M2 high back seats, Unwin tracking, heater, new underfloor PLS tail lift, new conversion, choice of 2

T REG 1999 RENAULT MASTER T35



2.5 diesel, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, bonded windows, M2 high back seats, Unwin tracking, heater, new underfloor PLS tail lift, new conversion, choice of 2

31 REG LDV CONVOY 400 HIGH ROOF



Factory, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, bonded windows, M2 high back seats, Unwin tracking, heater, new underfloor PLS tail lift, new conversion, choice of 2

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2.5 DCI, 16 seats, 14 high back seats, Unwin tracking, bonded windows, M2 high back seats, Unwin tracking, heater, new underfloor PLS tail lift, new conversion, choice of 2

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MoT

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48 Ambientie seats/leather headrests.
Air conditioning, 2 monitors, hot drinks.
Centre toilet, fridge, full draw curtains.
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3 point seat belts,
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07831 312879

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49 ambient seats, twin courier,
centre sunken toilet, power
operated continental door,
2 x drop down monitors,
water boiler, fridge, air con, sat nav,
manual gearbox, exterior metallic dark red, unlettered. 140,000km.

£185,000 + VAT

Break Away Coach Holidays

tel: **07785 563385**



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1989 DAF SB3000 LAG Panoramic
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57 seater. Good condition **£3,250**

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£5,500

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55. **£1,400**

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24 coach **£2,000**

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49 seats, full spec 12 Months MOT

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25 seater Coach, MOT 12/08/05

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51 seats, MOT 03/08/05

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On board tail lift, cedar
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Very good condition.

New tyres, new clutch

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blinds, rear heaters, CD, new
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Nice condition, ready for work

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32 seats, fully seat belted, wired for TV,
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Mob: **07971 693641**

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£125,000

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Anytime M: 07753979372

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£20,000 + VAT

1988 Volvo B10M Ikarus

53 seats, MoT February '06
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33 seats, 3 point seat belts, dual vehicle bus,
MOT'S 23.10.05 / 19.4.06
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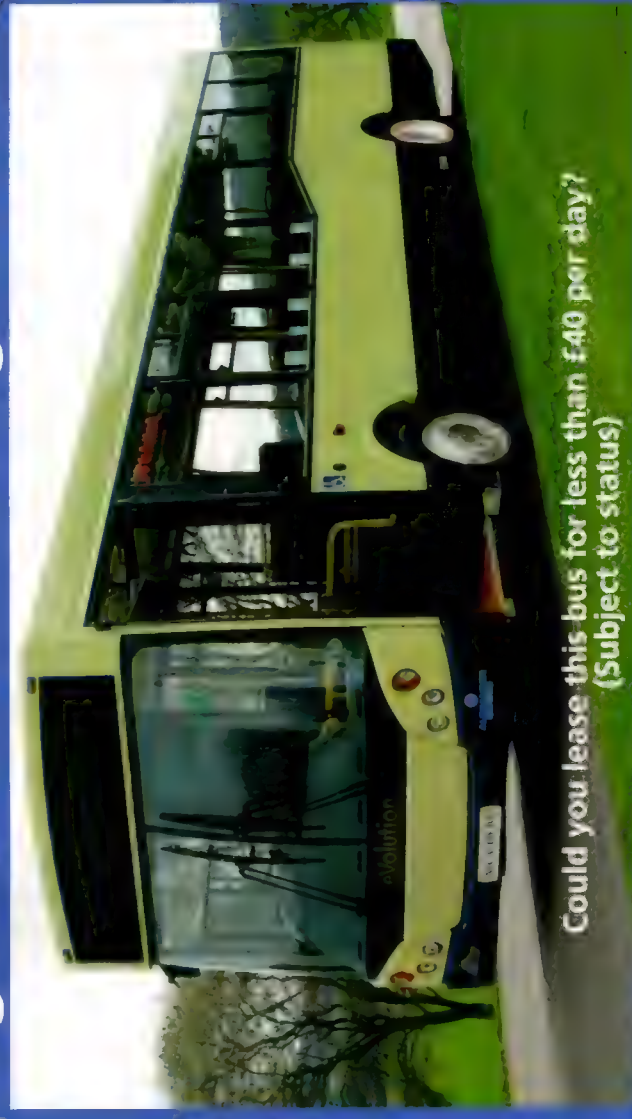
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SLF Neoplan

Choice of 2 1999, 12m, Coach, Seating from 33 to 50 Service Seats, Auto, Air Susp, Front Destination, Extra Large Luggage Pen, Cummins ZF Auto



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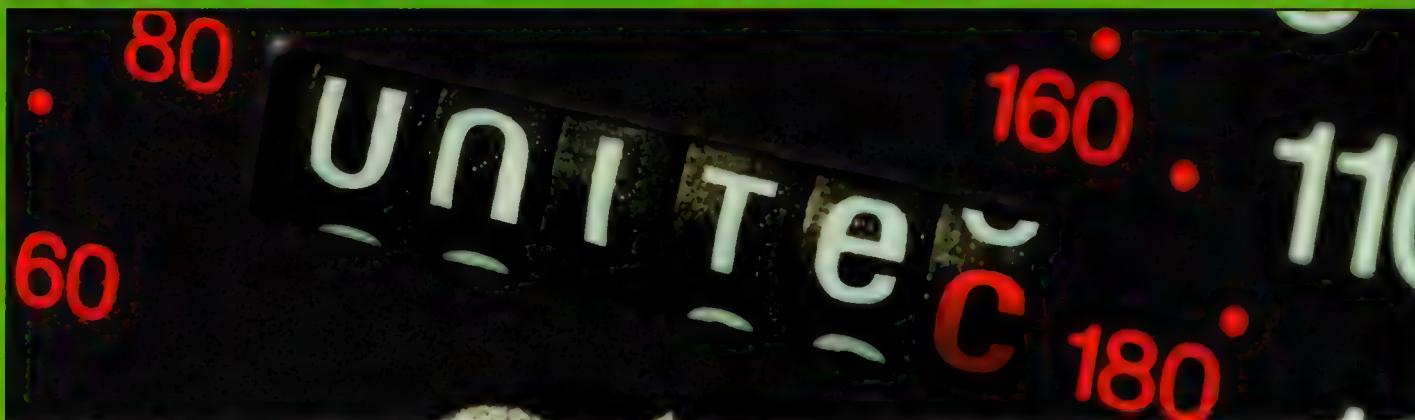
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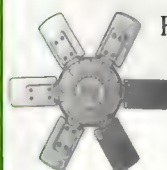
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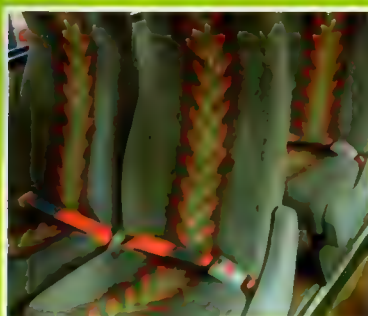
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National Express has appointed **ALISON GRACE** as group leadership development director. It is a new position, created to manage the group's leadership development programme and senior management succession planning. Grace also takes responsibility for the group's established graduate training scheme. Her career embraces periods with Nestlé, Woolworths and Cable and Wireless, where she held a number of human resources director roles working with C&W's global business units.

After four years on the board of National Express, **TIM STEVENSON** is retiring next month. **BARRY GIBSON** takes over the role of senior independent director.



■ **Chris Child.**

Stagecoach in Oxfordshire has a new marketing manager. **CHRIS CHILD** (27) succeeds **ADAM RIDEOUT**, who is moving to Stagecoach in Warwickshire. Child joins Stagecoach after four years with Ford of Europe, where he was a marketing analyst.



■ **John Smith.**

GoSkills, the Sector Skills Council for passenger transport, has appointed **JOHN SMITH** as its PCV driver training adviser. Smith's appointment is an internal secondment which will see him work closely with operators, helping to identify issues relating to the introduction of the EU Driver Training Directive. Smith has a wide range of experience in passenger transport, most recently as *GoSkills*' business adviser for the north-east

of England. His work in the region will be taken over by his successor, **JIM CHAPPELL**.

ROSEMARY THEW, West Midlands field director for Jobcentre Plus since 2001, is the new chief executive of the Driving Standards Agency. She takes up her appointment next month, and succeeds **GARY AUSTIN**, chief executive of the Agency since 2000.



■ **Les Watts.**

Ayats has a new managing director in the UK, **LES WATTS**. Watts has wide transport industry experience, starting as a driver, and later holding a number of managerial positions with companies which have included Travellers, Berryhurst, DSB and more recently Jumbocruisers, provider of specialised coach hire.



■ **Look CCTV's new board (L-R) David Cummings, sales director; Alan Myers, chairman; Rachel Cook, finance director and Andrew Prince, managing director.**

Look CCTV has had a management reshuffle. Managing director **ALAN MYERS** becomes chairman, while operations director **ANDREW PRINCE** is appointed managing director, responsible for developing Look's technology and support services. **DAVID CUMMINGS** remains as sales director, while **RACHEL COOK** is promoted to finance director. The changes see Myers devoting more time to dealing with customers and with new product development.



■ **Optare's MBO team - L-R rear: Paul Shepherd, Roger Fossey and Colin Childs. Front: Brian Wiggins, Bob Coombes and Glenn Saint.**

This week's management buy-out at Optare sees a team of six assume responsibility for the operation of the independent business, and the man who for many years was seen as "Mr Optare", **RUSSELL RICHARDSON**, parting from the company he helped create.

BOB COOMBES (51) is group managing director. Coombes joined Optare two years ago after 10 years with Dennis. The finance director is **ROGER FOSSEY** (58), who has been with Optare since 1989. **GLENN SAINT** (42) is technical director and plant director (Leeds). Saint joined Optare in 1997 as group technical director.

PAUL SHEPHERD (51) is aftersales director, responsible for the Unitec aftermarket business. Shepherd joined Optare in 2003 from Reading Buses, where he was operations director and an Optare customer. **BRIAN WIGGINS** (56) is materials director, and first worked at what is now the Optare plant in Leeds when he joined Charles H Roe, the coachbuilders, in 1964. From 1972 to 1982 he worked for Plaxton, then returned to Roe.

COLIN CHILDS (51) is plant director, Rotherham, Childs joined Optare in 1996 when it acquired the Rotherham-based Autobus business.

And Russell Richardson, who founded Optare in 1984 when Leyland closed the Roe bodybuilding business which was based on the site, has stepped down as a non-executive director, breaking his links with the business which he did so much to build.

Richardson is chairman of NABI Rt, the Hungarian company which has owned Optare since 2000, and which also owns the struggling US-based NABI Inc business.

Says Richardson: "While, for obvious reasons, I have been unable to participate in the transaction, I am delighted that Optare's future as an independent entity, controlled by its experienced and able management team, has been secured through this deal."

However, while Richardson is no longer directly involved he does add: "There will be an ongoing relationship between Optare and NABI in a number of business areas and I look forward to maintaining contact with Bob and the team in the future."

"Optare still has considerable potential to realise and its ability to go on designing, making and selling advanced products is undiminished – not only in the UK market but also in mainland Europe. I wish Optare and the MBO team every success."

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The Sprinter's true, low floor technology with stepless entry, ensures all passengers can enjoy easy access at all times – an essential commodity on busy commercial routes. Both models offer flexible seating plans with up to 25 seats available on the 6 tonne version.

The driving force behind the Sprinter is its 109bhp diesel engine – offering exceptional performance coupled with unparalleled economy and reliability. All this backed up by Mercedes-Benz unrivalled after sales support makes the Sprinter the perfect choice for even

the most demanding of services.

One way systems or winding roads – Low Floor Sprinter is the solution.

Contact EvoBus on 02476 626000 and ask for Kate Dodds.



Mercedes-Benz

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